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FIRST THINGS

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Marshall, *Marbury*, and Judicial Supremacy

Robert Lowry Clinton's thesis on "How the Court Became Supreme" (January) is intriguing, but most certainly wrong.

According to Professor Clinton, the Supreme Court has gone astray because it has misapplied *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), which only supports judicial "disregard . . . [of] existing laws in the decisions of particular controversies, provided that the constitutional and statutory provisions involved are, like those in Article III and the Judiciary Act, addressed to the Court itself."

Chief Justice John Marshall's opinion in *Marbury* cannot be confined to cases involving only constitutional "commands . . . directed at the Court itself and not to another branch of government." Sixteen years after this seminal opinion, the Chief Justice addressed the question whether Congress has the "power to incorporate a bank." In *McCulloch v. Maryland*, the Court ruled that Congress had such power, but only because it met Marshall's carefully crafted constitutional formula applying judicial review to constitutional directives aimed at the legislative branch:

> Should Congress, in the execution of its powers, adopt measures which are prohibited by the Constitution; or should Congress, under the pretext of executing its powers, pass laws for the accomplishment of objects not entrusted to the government; it would be the painful duty of this tribunal, should a case requiring a decision come before it, to say that such an act was not the law of the land.

Prof. Clinton's view has no support in the *Marbury* opinion either. While that case did address a constitutional question concerning court jurisdiction, not once did Chief Justice Marshall say that the Court's power to "say what the law is" was confined to constitutional directives addressed only to the courts. To the contrary, the Chief Justice enlisted support for judicial review by quoting from Article I, Section 9, the prohibition against levying a "tax or duty . . . on articles exported from any state," a provision that can only apply to Congress, which alone has the power to tax.

Thus, Prof. Clinton cannot enlist the venerable Chief Justice in his cause. Nor are his views supported by the relevant constitutional text. As he concedes, the doctrine of judicial review is found in Article III, Section 2, which extends "judicial power . . . to *all* cases . . . arising under this Constitution" (emphasis added). Yet, Professor Clinton amends this text with his assertion that the Court has jurisdiction only over some cases arising under the Constitution, namely, those arising under "Article III, Amendments 4-8 of the Bill of Rights, and certain provisions of Article I, Section 9."

These failings do not mean, however, that the prevailing doctrine of judicial supremacy is legitimate. But one must offer reasons other than the ones provided by Prof. Clinton if one is to prove that today's Supreme Court does not have "the support of the great Chief Justice Marshall for its assertion of power" as the "final interpreter" of the Constitution.

First, the Chief Justice's opinion in *Marbury* contains three separate and distinct statements that the written Constitution governs the courts, not the other way around. To claim otherwise, as the 1958 Supreme Court did in *Cooper v. Aaron* and the 1997 Court did in *City of Boerne v. Flores*, disregards Marshall's statements that the written Constitution is "a rule for the government of courts . . . and that

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courts, as well as other departments, are bound by that instrument."

Second, the Chief Justice's understanding of judicial power "to say what the law is" is based upon the presupposition that the written Constitution is law, not court opinions. That is why the Chief Justice sandwiched his remarks about judicial power in *Marbury* between paragraphs emphasizing that the very essence of a written constitution is that it is law. And it is the duty of the courts to "say" what that law "is," not "make" the law in the name of the Constitution, as is the habit of modern courts.

Given this understanding of law, there is no room for courts to elevate their opinions above the constitutional text. And that brings me to the question that Professor Clinton asked in his article: "How did the Court become supreme?" It did so by adopting the late nineteenth-century views of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. and his Harvard colleague, John Chipman Gray, who claimed that law is what the courts say it is.

But that was not so in Chief Justice Marshall's day, a time dominated by Sir William Blackstone's view that a court opinion was not "law," but only "evidence" of law, "since it sometimes may happen that the judge may mistake the law." Because Chief Justice Marshall constructed the entire edifice of judicial review on this foundation, there is no legitimate place for the doctrine of judicial supremacy in American constitutional law. It is entirely the invention of law professors, first imposed upon students at Harvard and now upon the American people.

Herbert W. Titus
Chesapeake, VA

Bravo to FIRST THINGS for publishing Robert Lowry Clinton's "How the Court Became Supreme." It is the most succinct statement he has made yet in his project (begun in his admirable 1989 book *Marbury v. Madison and Judicial Review*) of recapturing the very limited character of the Supreme Court's authority as that was understood by the framers of the Constitution and by the early American jurists called upon to interpret it. No doubt many who have been educated in judicial-supremacist orthodoxy will react with consternation at his arguments and his evidence. But here is more ammunition for his side of the historical debate, in which I heartily enlist:

James Madison, 1799 (*Report to the Virginia General Assembly*), replying to those who claimed that only the courts could examine the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Acts: "There may be instances of usurped power, which the forms of the Constitution would never draw within the control of the judicial department. . . . The decisions of the other departments not carried by the forms of the Constitution before the judiciary must be equally authoritative and final with decisions of that department."

John Marshall, 1819 (*Cohens v. Virginia*), conceding that some flat prohibitions on legislative power—like the ban on granting titles of nobility—may not be enforceable by courts: Article III "does not extend the judicial power to every violation of the Constitution which may possibly take place, but to 'a case in law or equity' in which a right under such law is asserted in a court of justice. If the question cannot be brought into a court, then there is no case in law or equity, and no jurisdiction is given by the words of the article."

Marshall again, 1824 (*Gibbons v. Ogden*), speaking of Congress' power over commerce: "The wisdom and the discretion of Congress, their identity with the people, and the influence which their constituents possess at elections are, in this, as in many other instances, as that, for example, of declaring war, the sole restraints on which they have relied, to secure them from its abuse. They are the restraints on which the people must often rely solely, in all representative governments."

Joseph Story, 1833 (*Commentaries on the Constitution*), addressing the question whether a "final interpreter" exists under the Constitution: "In measures exclusively of a political, legislative, or executive character, it is plain, that as the supreme authority, as to these questions, belongs to the legislative and executive departments, they cannot be reexamined elsewhere. . . . The remedy . . . in such cases is solely by an appeal to the people at the elections; or by the salutary power of amendment, provided by the Constitution itself."

In all the great debates of the first generation to live under the Constitution, what is notable is the paucity of references to the judiciary having any proper role in deciding most constitutional questions. There was virtual silence on that subject in the Bank controversy, in the newspaper war over Washington's Neutrality Proclamation, even in the debates over the amendments that became the Bill of Rights. When what we now call "judicial review" was mentioned by some participant in a controversy, the courts' potential involvement was more often than not roundly repudiated by leading framers like Madison, as in the executive removal power debate (mentioned by Clinton) or in the controversy over the Alien and Sedition Acts and the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions (see the *Report* cited above).

It would do the republic a world of good if law schools were to restore such lost history to the center of legal education—beginning perhaps with the unexpurgated opinions of Chief Justice Marshall and the *Commentaries* of Justice Story. In a world in which Alan Dershowitz holds the "Felix Frankfurter" chair at Harvard, I'm not holding my breath. But a wider audience for Professor Clinton's work of historical and theoretical reconstruction can only help.

Matthew J. Franck
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Robert L. Clinton replies:

I would like to thank Herbert W. Titus for the careful attention he

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has paid to my article on judicial supremacy. While I disagree with Mr. Titus' interpretation of *Marbury v. Madison*, it is fair to say that he has identified the most vulnerable points in my argument. Mr. Titus believes that my thesis on how the Court became supreme is inaccurate because John Marshall's *Marbury* opinion "cannot be confined to cases involving only constitutional commands directed at the Court itself."

Mr. Titus' argument is based largely on three observations: 1) Article III, Section 2 extends judicial power to *all* cases arising under the Constitution, and my thesis allegedly "amends" this provision by allowing jurisdiction in only *some* cases. 2) Marshall, in *Marbury*, did not explicitly confine the Court's holding to constitutional directives addressed to the courts, and he suggested in one of his examples supporting judicial review that the Court might someday invalidate an export tax, which violates a prohibition of Article I, Section 9 seemingly addressed to Congress. 3) In *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), Marshall suggested that the Court might be forced in the future to disregard congressional acts either prohibited by the Constitution or adopted in pursuit of ends "not entrusted to the government."

1) I do not think that I have amended Article III. In *Cohens v. Virginia* (1821), Marshall stated that Article III federal court jurisdiction rests on either a) the character of the parties, or b) the nature of the case. The kind of jurisdiction Mr. Titus refers to is the second of these types, and is normally described as "subject-matter jurisdiction." Technically, judicial review arises from Article III only by inference in the following way: Article III extends the subject-matter jurisdiction of the Court to cases arising under the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the United States. Article VI (the national supremacy article) declares the Constitution, congressional laws "pursuant" to the Constitution, and federal treaties to be the "supreme law of the land" which must be enforced in preference to any contrary *state* law or policy. This means that, whenever the Court is forced to choose between incompatible state and national laws in order to decide a case, it must first determine whether the national law is "pursuant" to the Constitution (i.e., is "constitutional") before it can decide the fate of the state law. If the Court could not determine the constitutionality of federal law in such a case, it would be without power to overturn a state court decision upholding a state law in the face of an incompatible national law. Carried to the limit, this means that the Court would have no power to reverse a state court decision invalidating a congressional act!

This reading of the Constitution, which appears to authorize a limited form of judicial review in a specific type of case, was explicitly confirmed by Congress in Section 25 of the Judiciary Act of 1789. In that Act, the Court was authorized to reverse or affirm any decision of a state's highest court in which the constitutionality of a national law was questioned. None of this has anything to do with *Marbury*—a case in which the plaintiff's plea of jurisdiction rested not on the subject matter of the case, but on the character of the parties. Mr. Titus writes as if, in Marshall's mind, Article III's grant of federal subject-matter jurisdiction carries with it an implied authorization to invalidate any congressional law that happens to come before the Court even in cases arising on other jurisdictional grounds. It is Mr. Titus' reading of Article III that "amends" the Constitution by collapsing the concepts of jurisdiction and judicial review, which are not the same thing. If they were, there could not, for example, be a doctrine of "political questions." Under this doctrine jurisdiction is presupposed, and the Court nonetheless asks whether or not it is appropriate to call into question an arguably invalid national law.

2) It is true that Marshall did not, in his *Marbury* opinion, explicitly confine the Court's power to "say what the law is" only to constitutional directives aimed at the Court. It is also true that Marshall's export tax example does not fit neatly into my reading of other portions of that opinion. On the other hand, the responsibility of confining earlier holdings rests largely with courts that are subsequently bound to apply such holdings in actual cases arising at later times. We cannot know for sure whether the Marshall Court would have invalidated a congressional export tax had the opportunity arisen. To my knowledge, Congress never passed such a tax during Marshall's tenure on the Court.

We do know, however, that the Chief Justice's remark on export taxes was pure *obiter dictum* and would not have been regarded even by Marshall himself as controlling in any subsequent case that might have come before his Court. Marshall himself provided the rule in *Cohens*, while disavowing some of the language in his earlier *Marbury* opinion: "It is a maxim not to be disregarded that general expressions in every opinion are to be taken in connection with the case in which these expressions are used. If they go beyond the case, they may be respected, but ought not to control the judgment in a subsequent suit, when the very point is presented. The reason of this maxim is obvious. The question actually before the court is investigated with care, and considered in its full extent; other principles which may serve to illustrate it are considered in their relation to the case decided, but their possible bearing on all other cases is seldom completely investigated."

Since export taxes were not before the Court in *Marbury*, and certainly were not "completely investigated," I suspect that Marshall simply made a mistake here. He might have retracted the remark had the opportunity presented itself. Not only does the remark not fit neatly in my own reading of *Marbury*, it does not fit neatly with the other examples Marshall supplies

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in the same passage: the treason clause, which is explicitly addressed to the Court; also bills of attainder and *ex post facto* laws, which are implicitly addressed to the Court in that they arguably constitute legislative usurpations of the judicial function. Even if one accepts the view that Article I, Section 9 authorizes the Court to invalidate national export taxes, this would mean only that the Court is entitled to disregard laws whenever such laws contradict constitutional provisions addressed to the courts or clearly violate explicit constitutional *prohibitions*. This is still a far cry from modern judicial review, in which the Court invalidates national law any time it thinks that Congress has overstepped its *legitimate* authority.

3) Marshall's suggestion in *McCulloch* that the Court might someday be forced to invalidate congressional acts either prohibited or *ultra vires* was—like the remark about export taxes in *Marbury*—pure *dictum*, and so the *Cohens* reservations raised above apply here as well. As to the meaning of "ends not entrusted to the government," Marshall doesn't give a clue in *McCulloch*. He does suggest one later in his answer to a pseudonymous critic's charge that *McCulloch* might be read to justify congressional prohibition of a state tax on land as conducive to the collection of federal taxes. Without going so far as to say whether the Court would actually invalidate such a law, Marshall does say that "such an act would be an attempt on the part of Congress, under the pretext of executing its powers, to pass laws for the accomplishment of objects not entrusted to the government."

The context of the remark makes it clear that Marshall believed the pretextual act to be unconstitutional not because it is an inappropriate means of accomplishing a *legitimate* governmental objective (the point at issue in *McCulloch*), but because the purpose of the act was to destroy the state's power of taxation—an "end" so far beyond congressional authority as to pose a "clear case" violation of the Constitution. Like the Section 9 examples given in *Marbury*, this example—at least to Marshall's mind—seems to involve a constitutional violation so blatant that, were the Court to lend support to it while performing regular judicial duties, it would be exposed to the charge of abetting the congressional violation.

All this said, it should be remembered that Marshall, in *Marbury*, drew a sharp distinction between a law's *being* invalid and a court's having the power to *declare* it to be so. This implies a recognition that Congress may enact "unconstitutional" laws that are nonetheless beyond the reach of the Court. Let it also be remembered that when Marshall spoke of the constitutional infirmity of pretextual acts in *McCulloch*, he qualified his language carefully, stating that the "painful duty" of the Court to disregard such an act was conditioned upon the presence of a case "requiring a decision."

Everything depends on what "requiring a decision" means. As I explained in "How the Court Became Supreme," this condition is *fully* met only when a constitutional provision addressed to the Court is involved. The Court would then be violating the Constitution *directly* by enforcing the unconstitutional act. Whether Marshall would have thought the condition met to a lesser degree when a clear constitutional prohibition is violated (as in the export tax clause), or when a graphic constitutional violation of some other kind is perpetrated (as in a congressional attempt to destroy the states), are matters on which reasonable persons may disagree.

As to Mr. Titus' other observations, I have little—if any—disagreement. There is no doubt that the *Cooper* Court in 1958 and the *Boerne* Court in 1997 grossly abused *Marbury* by ignoring Marshall's principle that the Constitution is law and thus governs the Court. It is also beyond doubt that, in the days of Marshall and Blackstone, court opinions were regarded not as law itself, but merely as evidence—or declarations—of law. The ascendancy of positivist jurisprudence a century later spelled doom for legal naturalism and the declaratory theory of law that was its complement, ushering in an age that would regard law as "whatever the courts say it is."

That brings me to a final rhetorical question: Can it be merely coincidental that the Court began to view *Marbury* as the fountainhead of judicial review not in the time of Marshall or Roger Taney, but exactly at the time at which legal positivism came into its own in the United States? Encrusted legal doctrine is a mighty barrier to legal change. *Marbury v. Madison*, as presently regarded by most in America's legal establishment, is the precedential rock upon which modern judicial supremacy stands. Yet the *Marbury* of contemporary constitutional law—in which the case is regarded as an activist decision supporting constitutional judicial hegemony—is not the *Marbury* of the Marshall Court. If we do not recognize this and restore the historical *Marbury* before it becomes too late to remember it, I fear that we may be saddled with judicial supremacy for a very long time.

In that regard, I thank Matthew J. Franck for his generous comments and his useful citations.

Psychology and Christianity

I approached William K. Kilpatrick's "Faith & Therapy" (February) with anticipation of a scholarly attempt at dealing with a difficult issue but left with a sense of disappointment that his understanding of psychodynamic psychotherapy is so limited and that he chose to make psychology per se the rival faith or whipping boy for the problems that plague the Christian Church in modern times.

His attack on the amorphous "therapeutic culture" prevents him from addressing the multitude of forces in today's world such as "postmodernism" and its reaction to the rationality of the scientific

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method, the politically correct agenda of minority subgroups, and the flood of violent images that pour out from the movies, television, and computer games. In his wholesale criticism, he may be "throwing out the baby with the bathwater." In doing so, he does great disservice to those who desperately need psychiatric intervention and treatment.

Mr. Kilpatrick mentions the dangers of mixing psychology with religious faith. I agree with him completely on this issue. At the same time, I would not mix a scientific understanding of the origins of the universe or a research protocol for the treatment of astrocytoma with religious faith. God is, indeed, transcendent and wholly Other and has given us the intelligence and ability to apprehend his creation while maintaining the capacity to view that creation with awe and wonder.

After thirty-one years of dealing with this issue, I am convinced that there is no serious conflict between good theology, good science, and good psychology. Contrary to Mr. Kilpatrick's assertion that "the therapeutic culture has no God," I assert that God is with me when I struggle with the couple whose son has committed suicide, with the woman who insists that her father is calling her home to be with him in death, and with the man who stays in his marriage despite severe emotional abuse and neglect at the hands of his wife who refuses to acknowledge her role in the relationship. I do not, however, reject sound psychotherapeutic principles or pharmacologic interventions in dealing with those suffering individuals.

Robert F. White, M.D., FAPA
Houston, TX

As much as I enjoyed William K. Kilpatrick's article, I must admit to being somewhat disconcerted at several comments he made concerning Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA), or, as he referred to it in his article, Ritual Satanic Child Abuse.

My family has been deeply involved with several survivors of SRA. As bizarre and incredible as many of the stories sound, much of the information has been verified by independent sources, including local law enforcement. I know, for example, of a police officer who has been able to officially verify many such claims. He is currently working with local and federal law enforcement across the United States; in fact, he has helped the Federal Bureau of Investigation prosecute—and win—several cases of Satanic Ritual Abuse.

That being said, Mr. Kilpatrick is technically correct when he states that the FBI "reports . . . no evidence of a single case of ritual satanic child abuse in the United States," because FBI agents (and other law enforcement officials) cannot prosecute a defendant and win if they approach the case with any type of religious terminology. If they would enter a courtroom and cite Satan as a contributor to the crime, the judge would promptly dismiss the case. Because of this, prosecutors must present the nature of the crime in a form that deletes any religious overtones. As a result, the FBI does not have any official record of SRA crimes—all of them are researched as such, but presented as something more common, such as child abuse. Once the cases are presented in this format, they can be—and frequently are—won.

Anthony Weber
Traverse City, MI

William K. Kilpatrick replies:
I didn't mean to deny the existence of satanic ritual abuse, or to suggest that FBI statistics are the last word on such matters. My point, which perhaps could have been made more clearly, is that there is little evidence of any abuse—satanic or otherwise—in the high-profile day care cases of the 1980s. Dorothy Rabinowitz has convincingly presented the case against conviction in a series of articles for the *Wall Street Journal*.

Unlike Dr. White, I have no problem with mixing a scientific understanding of the universe with religious faith. I think they mix well. Like him, I believe that there is no conflict between good psychology and good theology—a point that I elaborate on in my book *Psychological Seduction*. My criticisms are directed not so much against the practice of therapy as against the therapeutic Zeitgeist that permeates our culture (my original title, "Faith and the Therapeutic Culture," was changed by the editors). Of course, as Dr. White points out, there are many other problems facing the Church (postmodernism, pop culture, etc.), but it seems to me that these forces share in the same relativist assumptions that underlie the therapeutic ethos.

Talking to Gen Xers

Pardon my obtuseness, but what's the point of criticizing Generation Xers for being immoral or besotted by cynicism if, as a solution, you're only going to provide them with more of the same? Born one year shy of the vogue age bracket known as Generation X, I read with interest Sarah E. Hinlicky's views on getting the wayward Xers back into the fold ("Talking to Generation X," February). Her solution was both shocking and tragic.

Here's why. Because she is a believer, Ms. Hinlicky has beaten the odds of her age group. She believes in Christ, his Church, his word, and, subsequently, in "Absolute Truth." Yet for all of her enlightenment, which I am sure is sincere, she concludes that a veritable wallowing in human depravity is the "one thing" to woo her people back. The hope of the Resurrection is mentioned only as if it were an afterthought or a last-ditch effort.

In her essay, Ms. Hinlicky writes: "Show us the women who wept and loved the Lord but couldn't change his fate. Remind us that Peter, the rock of the Church, denied the Messiah three times. Tell us that Pilate washed his hands of the truth, something we are often tempted to do. Mostly, though, turn us towards God hanging on the Cross. That is what the world does to the holy."

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I strenuously disagree with such an approach. While I would be the first to advocate tact and sensitivity whenever sharing my faith with nonbelievers, I doubt this generation—which has been taught that "tolerance" is the highest virtue—needs my empathy. Already this age finds much security in the cliché: "I'm only human." The problem is, they can't find peace or joy in such bromides.

Like all other lost souls, Generation Xers are hungry for answers, indeed for absolutes (other than the absolute that "there are no absolutes"). Sinfulness is common, not inspiring, and commiseration is repellant to a man or woman of self-respect. Let's face it; young people don't need mere stories—their judgments are based on behavior. What they need is to experience Christians who practice what they preach, and who, shall I dare say it, are happy.

Ted Turner was once quoted as saying that "Christianity is for losers." Hearing this, I immediately thought: "The poor man just doesn't know the truth and doesn't understand how noble, great, and indeed powerful life in Christ is." Perhaps some well-intentioned Christian had tried to convert Mr. Turner by reminding him of how human it is to fail, to dishonor, to lie, to kill, to fear, indeed to be a loser. Obviously, such a method failed Mr. Turner. Will it work for others?

Martha L. Blandford
Ft. Thomas, KY

Sarah E. Hinlicky's essay, "Talking to Generation X," reminded me of an old story about a rabbi who stood up at a meeting and said, "I have an answer. Does anyone have a question?" The story is mildly amusing, but profoundly meaningful. The rabbi had an answer, but he could give it only to someone who was asking the question that it answered.

Now, if I could give advice to Generation X with any hope of it being accepted, I would say the following.

1) Ask the question, "How do I find purpose, and meaning, and hope in my life?" Don't dismiss it out of hand, even though that would save you all the trouble of thinking. If you don't like the swamp you are in, at least ask the question.

2) Don't wait for someone to prove something to you before you accept any answer, because then you will wait forever. As Cardinal John Henry Newman wrote in his *Grammar of Assent*, "Life is not long enough for a religion of [logical] inferences; we shall never have done beginning if we determine to begin with proof." No one who has reached the age of reason gets through a lifetime without making choices, some of them serious enough to shape our lives. We want true answers that correspond to reality and make it intelligible to us, but eventually we have to make up our minds. Even drifting through life without making them up is a kind of choice, but a perverted one.

3) Before dismissing all the answers that are on offer today, ask yourself, what are you offering to the world? If your answer is, "Nothing; the world can take care of itself," then ask, what are you offering to yourself? If the answer is again, "Nothing, for I have been to college and have read Nietzsche and Heidegger," reflect on what you are saying: that the highest achievement of human intelligence is to recognize that human intelligence has no intelligible object; all that we can understand is that ultimately there is nothing there to understand. If that is what you want, that is what you will get—a meaningless life in a meaningless world.

4) Or perhaps you will tell the world that what you offer to yourself, and to others who are willing to hear it, is personal autonomy: I am the author of my own intellectual and moral universe. But here you might reflect that one could get awfully lonely being the center of the universe. Living in a liberal paradise à la Richard Rorty, where everyone does as he pleases on the sole condition of not preventing others from doing the same, becomes just as lonely. If Ms. Hinlicky had not warned us against it, I would be tempted to say that it is a pretty good description of Hell.

5) Finally, it is your life that is at issue, so do no favors to other persons. Do no favors to God, or the universe, or the human race. Do no favors to the Church, or the State, or your family. Do no favors to anyone. Just get a life and begin by admitting that you may need some help. You could do worse than to listen to Sarah Hinlicky.

Francis Canavan, S.J.
Fordham University
Bronx, NY

Sarah E. Hinlicky replies:
It would be tedious to explain at length how Ms. Blandford has misunderstood the intent of my article, especially her assumption that the Resurrection is merely an afterthought. But in brief I will cite Matthew 9:10-13:

> And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

Offensive as it sounds, I think Ted Turner is right. His mistake is in assuming he's not a loser himself.

Father Canavan raises some excellent questions that ought to get asked more often. He is right on target when he says that proof cannot be the sole precondition to assent, though I'm afraid it's the very obsession with proof that keeps a good number of Gen Xers stuck in the mode of meaninglessness. I suspect that this is another value of telling the gospel as a story: there is

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a gut-level recognition that persuades on its own terms without getting bogged down in sophistry.

Sex and Integrated Bathrooms

In speaking of the impossibility of restraining eros by force, Daniel P. Moloney says, "Even conservative religious colleges with single-sex dormitories and rules about fraternization—Thomas Aquinas College in California, for example—cannot keep students from sleeping together" ("Eroticism Unbound," February). The statement is of course true as far as it goes, the author's more general point in this part of the article being that internal restraints are the only effective safeguards against immodesty, and that external restraints are necessary as conditions for the internal restraints. I would, however, like to correct a possible misunderstanding.

Some readers may interpret the sentence to imply that, despite the administration's best efforts, Thomas Aquinas College has some kind of difficulty with sexual indiscretions among its students. It was precisely this reading, or rather, misreading, that caused a priest friend of mine to bring the article to my attention. The facts are otherwise. We did have one widely publicized case in 1997 in which we were forced to expel a young lady (the man in the case was not a student) for refusing to stop sleeping under the roof of her fiancé.

But sexual indiscretions are generally unheard of on our campus. Students come here well aware of the rules and agree to abide by them. Moreover, most are raised in good homes with a strong sense of modesty, so they begin with the appropriate interior restraints. It is of course true that our students have the effects of original sin, but we have always been blessed with extraordinarily pious and chaste students. I would not want anyone to think ill of themundeservedly.

R. Glen Coughlin
Dean
Thomas Aquinas College
Santa Paula, CA

I was both interested and somewhat amused by Daniel P. Moloney's description of "Eroticism Unbound" at Yale. Here at Caltech, we too have co-ed bathrooms and showers, with two stalls apiece. A convention has developed that under normal circumstances, the door of the bathroom is left open. When one goes in the bathroom, one shuts the door behind him, and this is a signal to everyone else that the bathroom is occupied and off-limits. This convention is unnecessary with respect to the shower, because one can hear from the outside if anyone is in the shower. So here, at any rate, the result of co-ed bathrooms is that no more than one person is ever in the bathroom at the same time.

Whether or not this supports Mr. Moloney's thesis, it does illustrate that modesty is perhaps not as dead as Wendy Shalit might think.

Roy Koczela
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, CA

Daniel P. Moloney replies:
I thank R. Glen Coughlin for the care with which he read and understood the theme of my article. I used Thomas Aquinas College as an example of a school that has all the external supports for sexual modesty a co-ed college can have without being too burdensome. While I did not intend to imply that the culture of TAC is even close to being as eroticized as, say, Yale's is, most graduates will affirm that not everyone there is as chaste as Dean Coughlin and I would like. I am sure Dean Coughlin surmises that creative students do find a way to have their sexual escapades, though only rarely with such "indiscretion" that it comes to his attention.

Roy Koczela and his Caltech fellows deserve credit for finding a hack to solve the problem of co-ed bathrooms. That they do find it a problem, even in southern California, *supports* Wendy Shalit's thesis in *A Return to Modesty* that modesty is not dead but ignored and suppressed. It takes an ideological college administrator to put students in a situation where they would rather wait than use multiperson restrooms at their maximum occupancy

Reason, Abortion, and Stanley Fish

A number of readers of FIRST THINGS have asked for more details about my exchange with Stanley Fish at the American Political Science Association convention (While We're At It, February).

The meeting in which Professor Fish and I participated was concerned with whether moral truth can be attained by reason and whether deep differences of moral opinion can be resolved by rational argument. The chairman of the panel, Stephen Macedo, in summarizing Prof. Fish's position, asserted that although Prof. Fish is a critic of liberal ideas about "public reason," he shares most liberal policy prescriptions, including the "pro-choice" position on abortion. After Prof. Macedo's summary, I offered remarks that included criticism of Prof. Fish for writing (in "Why We Can't All Just Get Along," FIRST THINGS, February 1996) that "a pro-life advocate sees abortion as a sin against God who infuses life at the moment of conception; a pro-choice advocate sees abortion as a decision to be made in accordance with the best scientific opinion as to when the beginning of life . . . occurs."

On the contrary, I contended, nothing would please pro-life advocates more than to have the issue of abortion resolved precisely in accordance with the best scientific evidence as to "when a new member of homo sapiens comes into existence as a self-integrating organism whose unity, distinctness, and identity remain intact as it develops without substantial change from its beginning through the various stages of its development and into adulthood."

In response, Prof. Fish said that Prof. Macedo was simply mistaken: "I am not a supporter of abortion rights." Turning to my criticism, he graciously conceded the point,

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as Father Neuhaus reported in the Public Square. Prof. Fish agreed that, contrary to what he had supposed a few years ago, it is the pro-life side that appeals to the scientific evidence, while supporters of abortion have "shifted tactics" in light of the evidence and now go "elsewhere in search of rhetorical weaponry." As subsequent discussion made clear, none of this means that Prof. Fish has abandoned his skepticism regarding the truth-attaining power of reason or his doubts about the capacity of rational argument to resolve deep moral disagreements. Indeed, he was quite critical of my assertion that there are many open-minded people who are prepared to settle (and in many cases have settled) their minds on abortion and similar issues precisely on the basis of a rational assessment of the evidence.

He insisted that "there is no such thing as an open mind." I don't think he's right about that, but I'm trying to remain open minded about it.

Robert P. George
Department of Politics
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ

What a *World*

Wheaton College Professor Alan Jacobs accuses *World* magazine of "six degrees of separation" in reporting on the evangelical humanitarian relief organization World Relief (Correspondence, January). He failed to acknowledge the wide gap between what World Relief's Wheaton-based officials knew about their programs in Honduras and what our reporter was told by personnel in Honduras.

Mr. Jacobs accuses *World* of not paying attention to facts. To the contrary, we check our stories carefully, and consider it significant when a World Relief health officer says his programs involve "all forms of family planning"; that's a common reply among overseas health officers with a neo-colonial view of population control in the developing world. And here's one particularly salient fact: At the time of our story, World Relief received more than 60 percent of its funding from Washington agencies, while billing itself as "the church's relief agency."

Charitable organizations protest that such money comes with no strings attached—that should worry taxpayers—while ignoring their obligation as tax-exempt organizations to come clean, in both program and financial content, before private individual and church donors. Reporters have learned that it requires a pickaxe and miner's lamp to breach the granite wall constructed between government-sponsored overseas relief/development work and the public that pays for it.

Washington's global entitlement program is as yet untouched by welfare reform, and relief leaders know it. World Relief president Clive Calver, in a follow-up interview in World that Professor Jacobs apparently missed (*World*, September 19, 1998), acknowledged that his organization "lost its way." "It became too good at refugee, relief, and development work and it lost its roots into the churches." Mr. Calver admits what other organizations who promote themselves under Christian mission statements —and their apologists—miss. Even those who drink gingerly from the public trough are obliged to keep their noses clean.

Mindy Belz
International Editor, *World*
Asheville, NC

Alan Jacobs replies:
I was pleased to see Mindy Belz's response to my letter because it perfectly exemplifies *World*'s characteristic method, which might be called journalism by innuendo. To take but one example: We are given a partial-sentence quote from a World Relief health officer; we are told that the quote is "significant"; we are told that it is a "common reply" (though what it is a reply *to* we are not told); we are told that it exemplifies "a neo-colonial view of population control in the developing world." It cannot be clear to anyone how one gets from the phrase "all forms of family planning" to an accusation of neo-colonialism. Still less does it follow that World Relief supports forced sterilization, which was the implication that prompted my original letter to Father Neuhaus.

The only logic here is the logic of innuendo, and Mindy Belz takes refuge in such woolly but tendentious language as a way of covering the gaps in her magazine's research and reasoning. This is "paying attention to the facts"? When journalists at *World* learn to tell the difference between prophetic rebuke and the indiscriminate smearing of committed Christians—in relief and development or elsewhere—they may become a journalistic force to be reckoned with. Until then, they should be ashamed of themselves.

DORDT COLLEGE

FACULTY POSITIONS

Dordt College is seeking Christian academicians for openings beginning August 1999 in the following areas:

Mathematics: one-year position

Economics

Evaluation of applications continues until the position is filled. To learn more about a position and receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest that provides evidence of that commitment and a curriculum vitae to Dr. Rockne McCarthy, Dordt College, 498 4th Ave. NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250, facsimile: 712 722-4496; e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu; Web site: www.dordt.edu/offices/acadaff/

Dordt College encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

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Hating Hitler

Walter Sundberg's review of *Explaining Hitler* by Ron Rosenbaum ("Hating Hitler," February) ends with a quote from the book: "It is, in fact, the culmination of a truer sophistication to be able to hate Hitler, a sophistication that doesn't fall prey to the pseudosophisticated snares of explanation as exculpation, of explanation as abstraction away from Hitler's personal agency. Hatred as not that which one starts with, rather as something one ends up with; the product of a deeper understanding."

But what would Mr. Rosenbaum hope to achieve by advocating hate? The prescription to hate is not going to liberate us from the power of evil that has been so prevalent during this century. Hate is not going to contribute to the healing of our souls or to furthering peace in the world. On the contrary, the cultivation of hate cannot fail to foster the dominance of murderous human passions, and thus contribute to an increase in the power of evil. Embracing hate, at the beginning or at the end, means that we reject God, who is the fountain of love, and join with the Devil who is the sower of hate. By advocating hatred we unreflectively become the new agents of evil, the new pawns of the Devil in his war against God and his Christ.

Luis F. Caso
Worthington, OH

Pius IX and the Confederacy

I am dismayed that the Editor-in-Chief of a respected religious periodical chooses to relate a "poignant" story wherein Pope Pius IX sends the unjustly imprisoned Jefferson Davis a crown of thorns woven by his own hands and a written message "urging him to remember the sufferings of Christ, noting that just men frequently must suffer for the cause of justice" (While We're At It, February).

The poignancy of the story is overshadowed by the audacity and falsity of the Pope's misplaced sentiment. Leading a government that sanctions the enslavement and torture of human beings is not a "cause of justice." That Richard John Neuhaus labels the story "politically incorrect" betrays unexpected callousness and thoughtlessness.

Kenneth C. Hardy
Pasadena, CA

RJN replies:
Mr. Hardy's protest testifies to the great difficulty in resisting the presentism that makes moral judgments appear self-evident in retrospect. The fact is that there were many wise and honorable people in Charlotte, London, Paris, Rome, and elsewhere who in 1865 thought it a very close moral call between the South and the North, and many who thought the Southern cause more just. That is not the judgment of most of us today, which is no warrant for a sense of moral superiority over, for instance, Pius IX. I believe he was wrong, but neither Mr. Hardy nor I know what we would have thought in his circumstances.

Christianity and the Holocaust

Richard John Neuhaus cautions the Anti-Defamation League that "if the ADL is interested in Jewish-Christian dialogue, it is not helpful to claim that the Holocaust was 'the expression of a total pagan anti-Semitism nurtured by two thousand years of Christian teaching of contempt'" ("Stirring a Storm," Public Square, February).

Father Neuhaus' admonition is surprising since he has always insisted that Jewish-Christian dialogue must be based on honesty and cannot require either participant to sacrifice his beliefs for the sake of dialogue. On that basis, he has stated that Jews cannot demand that Southern Baptists stop evangelizing among Jews, even though such a project would, if successful, bring Judaism to an end.

If Christians are to be free to preach the gospel to Jews without imperiling Jewish-Christian dialogue, then surely Jews must likewise be free to insist that Christians acknowledge the critical role that Christianity played in preparing the soil in which Hitler's poisonous weed took root.

Howard A. Gootkin
New York, NY

RJN replies:
The theological anti-Judaism that marked much of Christian teaching was indeed exploited in the promotion of Nazism's racial and pagan anti-Semitism. To conflate the two, as the ADL statement does, is neither accurate nor helpful.

Pro-Innocence or Pro-Life?

I read in the Public Square a positive response to the National Council of Catholic Bishops' "Living the Gospel of Life" ("The House of Human Dignity," February). I am struck by the frequent use of innocence as that which gives human life its right to be protected.

This allows killing murderers and Iraqi soldiers, but not fetuses. I think we are on precarious moral ground when the principle of value is innocence rather than life.

I understand the gospel to be pro-life, not pro-innocence.

(The Rev.) Richard Lord
Rush Creek Christian Church
Arlington, Tx

Many Contributors

While I appreciate the very kind review of my book, *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Encyclopedia* (Briefly Noted, January), I should note that the work is not "by one author." Rather, I was the editor of the volume, which in point of fact has thirty-six contributors.

(The Very Rev.)
Peter M. J. Stravinskas
The Catholic Answer
Mt. Pocono, PA

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THIS TIME

The Myth of Declension

James Nuechterlein

Conservatives are still a long way from recovering from their post-impeachment funk. The most dispirited among them talk as if the American people, in their failure to recognize the necessity for President Clinton's removal from office, should themselves be put in the dock. In this view, the public's moral abdication (where was the outrage?) would justify—indeed may even require—the right's secession from a citizenry unworthy of its superior moral sensibility.

Most conservatives, while occasionally tempted to such melancholy conclusions, finally retreat from them, if only on grounds of prudence. They remember what happened to a McGovernism that decided, in effect, that America was not good enough for it. So they cast about for excuses for the public's refusal to see things the way it ought to have seen them: slick Willy's slickness, a booming economy, an aversion to risk, an understandable if misplaced reluctance to make moral judgments, the ineptitude of the House managers in presenting their case.

A few of them edge up to what I—in splendid isolation among conservatives—take to be the case. The American people did not get things wrong at all. They disagreed with conservatives not on the President's behavior, but on the appropriate punishment for that behavior. Removal from office was simply too radical a step. As Ramesh Ponnuru shrewdly put it in *National Review*: "It was not so much that Americans opposed removal because they supported Clinton so strongly. Rather, they supported Clinton so strongly because they opposed removal."

But even Ponnuru, for all his understanding, does not believe that the public was right to oppose removal. He recognizes that it would be feckless for conservatives to belabor the matter, but deep down he agrees that there was, in some sense, a failure of moral perception on the part of the American people: "Conservatives are entitled—are required—to insist that a large majority of the public got impeachment wrong." Conservatives of Ponnuru's persuasion thus avoid post-impeachment funk only by a willed refusal to linger over its moral implications. Like the President, if for rather different reasons, they want to put impeachment behind them and move on to other things.

Impeachment quite aside, conservatives have a natural proclivity for searching for signs of moral slippage in society. That is simply the kind of thing conservatives do; it is one of their assumed social functions. That social duty carries with it obvious dangers. There is a very fine line distinguishing the moral sentinel from the common scold. One way of staying on the right side of that line is to maintain a sense of historical perspective.

Americans have had a habit of imagining themselves in a state of moral free fall almost from the beginning. The Puritans who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1620s had a strong sense of themselves as agents of God's providence, but the members of the successor generation worried endlessly about their failure to live up to the moral standards set for them. As Perry Miller, the brilliant historian of the Puritans, put it: "In the 1640s there commenced in the sermons of New England a lament over the waning of primitive zeal and the consequent atrophy of public morals, which swelled to an incessant chant within forty years. By 1680 there seems to have been hardly any other theme for discourse, and the pulpits rang week after week with lengthening jeremiads."

What began with the Puritans of the seventeenth century has been picked up by virtually every generation since. The themes developed by Michael Wigglesworth in *God's Controversy with New England* in 1662 have been elaborated on by religious and secular moralists for over three centuries. The same Americans who annoyed European visitors with their endless braggadocio endured perpetual concern over the condition of the national soul.

The clergy of the revolutionary era speculated that the depredations the colonists suffered from England were punishments for colonial sins. Americans of the Jacksonian era lamented the decline from the standards of virtue set in the great days of the Founding. Social critics in the late nineteenth century expressed doubt that the nation was worthy of the sacrifices made to preserve the Union during the Civil War. Many people saw the Great Depression as a fit judgment on the gaudy self-indulgence of the 1920s. And so on even unto the present moment.

Not infrequently the jeremiads take on a partisan cast. Liberals depicted the 1950s—which conservatives experienced as a virtual golden age—as a complacent and irresponsible retreat from the social democratic strivings of the New Deal and Fair Deal. In the sixties, things were turned around. The left viewed the decade as a heroic revival of conscience while conservatives saw in it a falling away from the moral and political sobriety of the

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Eisenhower era to adolescent indulgence in moral license and political grandiosity.

In labeling this perpetual tendency "the myth of declension" (a term applied by historians specifically to the Puritan experience) I do not mean to suggest that there is never any truth in it. The Puritans of the 1660s may have been right in thinking that their generation did not measure up to John Winthrop's. Some periods of our history do seem less worthy of admiration than others. Who would not instinctively agree that the politicians of the Jackson era were, as a class, inferior to the generation of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Adams, and Hamilton?

But moral analysis must always proceed with caution, and the larger the moral judgment offered, the greater the caution required. Generations have greatness, and the absence thereof, thrust upon them. The Founders faced more momentous challenges than did the Jacksonians, and so we are naturally inclined, their specific actions for the moment aside, to attribute to them more heroic stature. Similarly, we celebrate to the point of reverence those who endured the Depression and World War II, and we of whom less has been required imagine ourselves—whether rightly or not we can never know—as moral pygmies by comparison. We would have had to have been there and faced what they faced to know for sure, and we weren't and didn't.

Sensible historical comparisons require, in addition to a tentative spirit, a taste for complexity. Consider the matter of prosperity. If there is one theme common to all American jeremiads, it is that prosperity corrupts. From Michael Wigglesworth to yesterday's op-ed, we are invariably instructed that we have been made soft, lax, and indifferent by our material preoccupations. All of which is true (as the Scriptures insistently remind us), but perhaps not, in this large social context, particularly useful.

Distinctions are in order, beginning with the obvious one between prosperity as potential inducement to sin and prosperity as sinful in itself. One occasionally gets the sense from our social critics that it would be morally bracing for us to pursue economic policies that result in collective financial ruin. It takes someone who has never been poor to suppose that poverty is a goad to virtue. Those who have experienced poverty know how cruelly stupid that view is.

Long way back, then, to our current situation, to which we need to apply the first law of social analysis: avoid over-interpretation. We are, as with all generations, morally confused and confounded. We ought to deny ourselves, however, that peculiar form of moral conceit that supposes we are distinctively so. The myth of declension is, like all myths, a meaning-making instrument. We should not burden it with more weight than it can bear. FT

Change

Her kitchen, it had been her kitchen twenty years.
She put the ginger in the cupboard,
turned out the light, opened the back door.
The shattered globe of an old moon had spiked itself
along the blossoms on their dogwood tree.
He said it was over; therefore it was over.
All solemn-eyed, naive, she drank him in,
his anger, standing there, hands on his hips,
watched him, practiced, redescribe their lives.
How well he's managing the separation.
It wasn't working. It couldn't. He couldn't.
Anymore.
They had lived together too long.
They were growing old together.
She sat on the stoop,
watched their cat sweep up and over the back fence
and the nickel-plated moon slip off their tree.
Cooler. It was cooler and close to midnight.

Bill Buege

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Opinion

Christmas in Sudan

William L. Saunders

I spent last Christmas in Sudan. As readers of this magazine know (see Paul H. Liben, "Murder in Sudan," August/September 1995, and Joseph R. Gregory, "African Slavery 1996," May 1996), Sudan is a land of murder, slavery, and man-made famine, a land where a brutal and tyrannical government wages war on its own people, particularly the Christian and animist black ethnic groups of the south. In addition, the government intimidates and harasses those in the north who oppose its violations of human rights.

In particular, it has engaged in a long campaign to intimidate the Roman Catholic Church. It arrested the archbishop of Khartoum this past summer on trumped-up charges, and it regularly bulldozes the Catholic schools built in the refugee camps that ring the city of Khartoum. The government has also arrested, and apparently tortured, two priests whose "trial" is being widely protested by human rights groups. The government is actually threatening to crucify the priests.

As a human rights lawyer, I have been deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Sudan for several years. Two years ago, I met Macram Max Gassis, the Roman Catholic bishop from a besieged part of the country, when he came to Washington to protest the murder and enslavement of his people. Last fall he invited me to accompany him on his pastoral Christmas visit. The bishop's diocese is huge, more than twice the size of Italy. He planned to visit two parts of his diocese where the suffering is very great, the Nuba Mountains and northern Bahr el-Ghazal.

We went first to the Nuba Mountains. (I must keep the precise location secret for security reasons.) The Nuba Mountains area, itself the size of Scotland, is particularly isolated. While most of the resistance to the government is located in the south, the Nuba Mountains are "north of the south," toward the center of the country. The people there are, in effect, surrounded by government forces, and cut off from the main forces of the resistance. The Nuba Mountains are also located north of an area of oil reserves that the government, amidst failed domestic economic policies, is desperately trying to develop (in order to obtain foreign currency to pursue, in turn, the war against its citizens).

For these reasons, the government of Sudan is determined to "de-populate" the Nuba Mountains of the black Nuba people (to replace them with Muslim tribes). As detailed in numerous reports, such as the one from the U.S. Committee for Refugees in December 1998, the government's aim is to force the people off their land and into "peace camps," where they are forced to convert to Islam or starve. The government refuses to permit Operation Lifeline Sudan, the UN-sponsored famine relief operation, to come to the Nuba Mountains. Famine, then, is an ever-present threat. Consequently, Bishop Gassis works tirelessly to bring in supplies, including seeds and plows, salt, soap, and used clothing.

We flew into Sudan secretly, to a hidden landing strip, avoiding government garrisons along the way. Resistance soldiers, including one named Muhammad Ali, met our plane. They maintain the landing strip and arrange transportation for the supplies the bishop brings. The bishop, because of his tireless protest against the government's practices, is considered an enemy by the government (which has issued a warrant for his arrest); for the same reasons he is a hero to the Nuba people themselves. Consequently, the resistance provides security for him whenever he is in the Mountains. Wherever we went, we were accompanied by armed guards, who also guarded our compound at night.

Once on the ground, it was necessary to unload quickly. Government airplanes patrol the skies, and would bomb us if we were spotted. We immediately embarked on an exhausting hike of several hours, over dry and rocky terrain, to reach the village/parish headquarters.

"Villages" in the Nuba Mountains actually consist of groups of huts scattered over a wide space. This is necessary to avoid being spotted and bombed by the government planes. The huts themselves are difficult to see because they are made of mud and reeds, and blend in well with the surroundings.

Shortly after our arrival, a group of the bishop's parishioners arrived to greet him with singing, dancing, and drumming. This was repeated by other groups over the next few days. Sometimes they came from local villages, sometimes from villages many hours (even many days) away. Always there was joy. They sang unfamiliar songs and Christian hymns; they played on drums made from logs, coffee cups, and empty shrapnel shells; they carried wooden staves and homemade crosses. As I witnessed their joy at the presence of their "outlawed" bishop, the words of the gospel came to mind: "Blessed are you when men hate you, and revile you, and denounce

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your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and dance for joy" (Luke 6:22-23).

The following day we went on a long hike to see a new school that the bishop was having built. On the way, we crossed a river bed. Although the rainy season had ended barely a month previously, the river was already bone-dry. Finding water is difficult in the Mountains. Though the Nuba Mountain area is the ancestral home of the Nuba people, government troops and allied Muslim tribes have forced them higher into the mountains, away from their traditional pastures and wells. (The government poisons their wells whenever they are found.) Without tools, they are forced to dig wells by hand, though sometimes they are able to use pieces of shrapnel for digging. In this river bed, the people had dug such a well. It was about five feet deep. Since both people and animals use it, it is often contaminated, and the people suffer many ailments as a result.

The buildings of the new school are made of mud bricks, for camouflage. The school lacks chairs or desks; tree branches are used instead. The teachers are also in desperate need of books, paper, and pencils.

The teachers and students gathered to greet the bishop. Because of the government's destruction of schools, there has been little education available in the area for the past six years, so some of these first and second graders are older than usual. The children sang "I'm so happy today" as a greeting for us. We planted trees to provide shade and protection, and as a symbol of hope. As one of the teachers told us, "What is important in the midst of civil war and persecution is education; without it, the young are lost. And they are the future of our people."

Over the days leading up to Christmas, I had the opportunity to meet many of the people who lived in this area. About half are animists, with the remainder divided evenly between Christians and Muslims. They live at peace with one another, in what the bishop calls "living dialogue." The commander of the resistance forces in the area is a Muslim, while some of his brothers are Christians. The people of the Nuba Mountains are, as the commander said, "a generation of reconciliation." Since some Muslim children attend his school, the bishop is seeking a Muslim teacher for their "catechesis" class.

Here is the tragedy of Sudan in a nutshell. The government seeks to destroy the Nuba, whether Christian, animist, or Muslim. The Christians and the animists are "infidels," while the local Muslims, being tolerant and peaceful, are not, from the government's perspective, "good" Muslims. While the government tries, in the name of Islam, to destroy the Catholic Church, the Church itself, respecting the freedom of conscience of all the Nuba, ensures that the religious beliefs of Muslim children are respected in its schools. This is a war in which intolerance and hatred are pitted against love and "living dialogue." As a Muslim who works with the Catholic school said, "If the Catholic Church is here, I will be free."

The bishop celebrated Mass outdoors on Christmas Eve. During the Mass, it occurred to me that the first Christmas Eve in Palestine must have been much like this—rural landscape, a pastoral people, among "modest" dwellings, with the cattle "lowing" and the stars overhead (even a shooting star from the east).

On Christmas Day, all the people gathered in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul to celebrate Mass. This is a cathedral like few others. It is not a building; rather, it is composed of "pillars" of living sycamore trees that offer camouflage from government planes. Beneath the trees, in a hollow, we gathered with perhaps a thousand parishioners.

It was a truly festive occasion. The people were dressed in colorful (albeit tattered) clothes; many had flowers or decorative ribbons in their hair or had plaited their hair in striking designs. Some carried delicate wooden crosses; others had crosses sewn onto their clothing. One hundred were there to be baptized; forty to be confirmed. (During last Easter's service, the bishop baptized five hundred, confirmed four hundred, and performed sixty marriages!)

During the service, the bishop received a message from the resistance. They had intercepted a message from the military—the planes had been sent to bomb. What to do? We were well-hidden beneath the trees; perhaps the planes would not find us. In the stillness, the bishop declared, "We will not let them disrupt the Mass." He asked us to pray.

Terror bombing is literally an everyday occurrence in Sudan. As human rights groups have reported, the government routinely bombs hospitals and refugee camps in the south. In the Nuba Mountains, it seeks to sow terror by indiscriminately bombing civilian targets, hoping thereby to force the people off their land and into the "peace camps." It drops cluster bombs and shrapnel bombs. It does so even on Christmas, and even during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Anytime one hears an airplane, one runs for cover—only the government has planes, and as one elder remarked, "If they see people dancing or gathering food or doing anything, they bomb." The ceasefire that was in effect for most of Sudan until January 15 did not apply to the Nuba Mountains, allowing the government to focus its bombing on the area.

Luckily, the planes did not find us and the Mass was not interrupted. How differently one experiences the liturgy in a place such as this. Phrases, well-memorized, often-spoken, here penetrate the consciousness and sear the soul. "Lord, protect us from all anxiety." "Let us pray for peace." "Look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church." On Christmas Day, the Old Testament reading was from Isaiah

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52:7—"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news." These words were uttered and heard with great emotion and deep feeling.

The Christmas service ended with representatives of the people bringing gifts to the bishop—gourds, a rooster, corn—while singing, "You bring the light of the world; give us a blessing." Here, in true Christmas spirit, people who had very little gave freely.

That evening, the celebration of Christmas continued. (There was no threat of bombing as the planes, faced with a long roundtrip to their home base, leave the area in mid-afternoon.) There was much dancing, accompanied by Christian hymns. There was wrestling, the Nuba people's "national" sport. There was a medieval "mystery play," retelling in local and humorous terms the story of Lazarus and the rich man.

We left the Nuba Mountains a few days later to travel to Bahr el-Ghazal. The day we left, the government bombed a Nuba village in the bishop's diocese because, as he said, "it was flourishing." "They bombed the church and the school. Now we must start all over." When government troops overran another nearby village, they abducted the mother and children of the Muslim soldier I mentioned previously, Muhammad Ali.

There had been no priests in the area we visited in Bahr el-Ghazal for over twenty years. (The south of Sudan is roughly 45 percent Christian.) Thus, when our plane arrived, the runway was surrounded by hundreds of people. They sang "Hallelujah" and "Joy to the World"; different groups marched, carrying wooden crosses. A band greeted us. The people carried banners of welcome. One sign alluded to Isaiah 18:2 (which many scholars believe refers to the land of Cush or Nubia, which is Sudan)—"Your tall, smooth-skinned warrior people welcome you." On our way to camp, people raced along, in front, behind, and beside our landrover.

The bishop met with his catechists. In addition to blankets and mosquito nets, they desperately need books and Bibles. As one said, "It has been so long, we have nearly forgotten the words." Many of the catechists are women. This is not surprising, for one thing the bishop always emphasizes in his meetings with priests and catechists is the advancement of women (along with education and ecumenism). He also insists that girls attend his schools. As one woman remarked, "The women of this land were neglected until the Catholic Church arrived."

The catechists perform the vital role of keeping the Church alive, ensuring it is nourished despite the persecution. Westerners may not realize it, but the church in Sudan has apostolic roots—it was founded by the deacon Philip when he evangelized the eunuch from the court of Candace, that is, Nubia (Sudan). Many Sudanese I spoke with were proud their country "was Christian before Europe was." The invasion of Islam and the Arabs cut the church off from the other Christian churches, so that it withered. The catechists, such as those we met, are determined that this will not happen again. For over twenty years, they have kept the faith alive despite the absence of priests. They are, as the bishop said, "heroes of love." Several have been murdered, most have been hunted, some have been tortured but escaped. One of the latter told me that his captors sneered at him, "Convert, or die like Jesus Christ."

On the Church's calendar, December 28 is the Feast of the Holy Innocents, commemorating the slaughter of the martyr-children of Bethlehem by King Herod. That afternoon we met their modern counterparts—the "redeemed children." These were Dinka children, from age nine to nineteen, who had been abducted and enslaved by Muslim militias or Muslim tribesmen, and who had either escaped or been "redeemed" from their captors for a price. Some had been abducted at ages as young as six; some had spent twelve years in slavery. Usually their parents had been killed before their eyes. All were now orphans; some had been so young when they were kidnapped that they could never find their way home; many did not know their given names. Some of the girls had been raped. All of the children had been grievously mistreated. In a scene whose horror is difficult to convey, the children showed us where each had been branded, as one would brand an animal, on the forehead or arm. (There are widespread reports that abducted children are also sold on an international slave market.)

We met with seventy of these children. The bishop takes care of them, making sure they are clothed, fed, housed, and educated. Despite their suffering, they radiate hope. To the bishop they sang, "You are our link to the Apostles, and bring us Christmas."

One of the elders told me, "If we surrender to the government, we will be slaves in our own land. We have heard about human rights on the radio. Why, if there are human rights, does the world not help us?"

December of 1998 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, an occasion discussed in a statement by the Ramsey Colloquium, of which I am a member. (See "On Human Rights," FT, April 1998.) The Declaration is, in its insistence on the dignity of each person, a protest against the barbarity of the first half of the twentieth century. Yet, at the very end of that century, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups are being annihilated by the government of Sudan, while the world, busy celebrating the Universal Declaration, takes little notice. How does one explain such silence? What does one say to a victim?

All I can say is this—the situation in Sudan is not hopeless. The people there have not given up hope, and it would be a crime if we did. But we must also act. It would take relatively little effort by the UN or

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a coalition of concerned governments to stop the terror bombing and to insist that food be delivered wherever and whenever it is needed. (This could be accomplished, at minimal risk, by the establishment of a no-fly zone in the south and the Nuba Mountains. The Sudanese government has very few aircraft.) That would stop the threat of famine, and permit besieged peoples to rebuild and stabilize their lives. (A political settlement might be possible, but it will have to be a just peace, not a cloak for tyranny by the government of Sudan.) It seems to me that, if the world cannot find the courage to do this, then the Universal Declaration of Human Rights may be merely words on paper after all.

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(EDITORS' NOTE: The Center for Religious Freedom in Washington, D.C., is conducting a "Campaign of Conscience" for Sudan by organizing campus protests, prayer vigils, and a mass e-mail campaign to Congress. For more information, call 202-296-5101.)

Letter from Moscow

Lawrence A. Uzzell

Visitors from the West are often surprised to learn how many historic Catholic churches are scattered about the Russian heartland. Today's ultranationalists cultivate the myth of a purely Russian-speaking, purely Orthodox czarist Russia with Catholics only in far-western possessions like Poland or Lithuania. But in fact there were more than three hundred Roman Catholic parishes before 1917 within what is now the Russian Federation, many in places such as Irkutsk in eastern Siberia.

Even then the Russian Empire was a demographic mixing bowl, with communities of ethnic Poles or Germans in the remotest provinces. Under Stalin, of course, the mixing became more massive and more coercive than ever. But by Stalin's death there were only two functioning Catholic churches left in all of Russia, and none east of the Urals. For the last decade the Catholics have been trying to recover what they lost, only to face charges of "proselytism" and "spiritual aggression."

Late in 1998 the Russian Orthodox bishop of Oryol, several hundred miles south of Moscow, learned that a nineteenth-century Roman Catholic church building was about to be returned to the city's newly revived Catholic parish. He contacted the provincial government to protest this decision, and it was quickly reversed. Aleksi II, the Orthodox Patriarch of Moscow, said not long ago that the only Catholics in Russia are diplomats in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Fortunately, the Patriarch's statement does not exhaust the complex reality of Orthodox-Catholic relations in today's Russia. In Kazan, on the mid-Volga, Catholics converted an ordinary apartment into a chapel after the secular authorities refused to return their nineteenth-century church building, which had been converted into a wind tunnel for aviation research. The local Orthodox bishop visited the apartment to pronounce a blessing of his own on the new sanctuary and on the Argentine priests who serve there. In Bryansk near the Ukrainian border, where the former Catholic church is now an apartment building, an elderly Orthodox resident of the building allows the revived Catholic parish to celebrate Mass in her apartment.

A powerful faction within the Catholic Church is evidently willing to make major concessions on the religious freedom of Catholics in Russia for the sake of progress toward the goal of ending the nine-century-old schism between Eastern and Western Christendom. Since mid-1997, for example, the Vatican has muted its objections to Moscow's legislation restricting the rights of religious minorities. The Pope even received Boris Yeltsin personally in Rome shortly after Yeltsin signed that bill into law. The Vatican has received little in return for such concessions: Patriarch Aleksi still rejects even a symbolic meeting with the Pope. Those who understand today's Russian Orthodox Church know that there is simply no chance of reunion in the near future.

Whatever concessions the Pope may be willing to make to Orthodoxy, they will have little effect. Orthodox in Constantinople and New York might react with joy, but Aleksi and his circle will simply find other excuses to keep the Vatican at arm's length. As a political and bureaucratic institution, the Moscow Patriarchate needs Rome more as an enemy than as a friend.

Today's Russian politicians have found the Orthodox tradition to be one of the most potent forces to fill the ideological vacuum that has followed the collapse of Leninism. Unfortunately, Orthodoxy is attractive to them not as a vision of man and God against which one judges one's own government and people, but as a neo-pagan tribal religion, a reservoir of slogans and symbols for trumpeting one's own superiority. For the Church's hierarchy, the most reliable path to power and money is to cooperate with such politicians. Today's ideologized Russian Orthodoxy looks like a Slavic version of

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Japanese Shintoism.

This tendency has been gathering strength since about 1993, when religious freedom and openness to Western ideas reached their peak in Russia. During the 1995 parliamentary elections I visited the monastery at Sergiev Posad northeast of Moscow, home of the Moscow Patriarchate's most important divinity school. By coincidence my visit coincided with that of one of the candidates for the local seat in parliament, an ally of nationalist General Aleksandr Lebed. Of the dozen candidates for the seat, he was the only one invited to address the school's assembled faculty and students: In effect he was being given the school's endorsement.

What struck me most in his remarks—and even more in the questions from the audience—was their secular content. There were hardly any questions about issues that most Christians would consider to have a peculiarly moral character, such as abortion, but intense interest in topics such as the expansion of NATO. The candidate began his remarks by stressing that he was an ethnic Russian and an Orthodox Christian. When I asked him what it personally meant to him to be an Orthodox politician in today's Russia, he hesitated and then admitted that he was still "in transition" from communism to Orthodoxy and that he did not even attend church services.

In that respect the candidate was typical of today's Russians, only about 1 percent of whom can be found in church on a typical Sunday. But about half identify themselves to pollsters as Orthodox. If you were to ask these Russians about the theological issues that differentiate Orthodoxy from the West, few would be able to give a coherent response. When they think of Catholicism they think of Poland, and especially of the occupation of Moscow by a Polish army during the seventeenth-century Time of Troubles (which they remember as if it happened yesterday). The popular attitude toward Catholics is much like that of the English-speaking world a century ago, when every schoolboy was taught to celebrate the defeat of the Spanish Armada as a specifically Protestant triumph.

Attitudes toward Protestantism are more volatile. A decade ago the average Russian had no strong feelings either for or against Protestantism, but missionaries from the West have changed that. The American missionary who can barely utter one sentence in Russian, and who acts as if the Russians had never heard of the gospel before his own arrival, has been all too common. As one well-informed American Protestant missionary told me, his cause would have been better served if the West had sent one-tenth as many missionaries that were ten times better prepared. By stirring up largely justified resentments, Protestant missionaries helped lay the groundwork for the 1997 law restricting religious minorities. Ironically, the foreign missionaries themselves have suffered relatively little from the law's implementation. The main victims so far have been indigenous Russian Protestants, including some whose families have been Protestant for a century or more.

Try a thought experiment: Suppose that Russia were to undergo an ideological evolution somewhat like that of Western Europe in the 1950s, with nationalism fading as continental and global links multiply. Would the Russians and other Orthodox then be ready for civilized dialogue with Western Christians, leading to reunion? The most likely answer: dialogue yes, reunion no. The reason is that the Western churches themselves are not ready for reunion, not having solved their own identity crises. For example, the differences between the most traditional and the most modernist elements within contemporary Catholicism are greater than the differences between Martin Luther and the Council of Trent. Until Western Christians themselves can decide whether to cast their lot with tradition or with trendiness, the best they can hope for from the Orthodox will be a polite distance.

In their dealings with Catholics and Protestants, as with the International Monetary Fund, the Muscovites have proved to be better chess players than their Western counterparts. Patriarch Aleksi believes that the Pope has a romantic longing for reunion which Moscow can use to extract concessions from Rome without giving anything significant in return. He also understands that the shrinking World Council of Churches needs him and his fellow Orthodox more than the Orthodox need it. Unfortunately from the point of view of Orthodox outside Russia, the concessions that seem most important to Aleksi are not theological but political, such as the West's tacit acceptance of secular laws designed to help the Moscow Patriarchate suppress its competitors within Russia.

On that basis one could even make a case that it might be better for a meeting between Pope and Patriarch not to take place in the near future. Such a meeting would probably produce nothing more on the positive side than a photo opportunity; on the other hand, it might give Aleksi more room to resist the legitimate demands of simple, rank-and-file Catholics in places like Oryol to get their churches back. Until the Moscow Patriarchate is willing to concede basic religious freedom to Russia's indigenous Catholics and Protestants—which is inconceivable until today's top metropolitans and archbishops retire—hopes for serious steps toward reunion are likely doomed to disappointment.

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Southern Baptist Ghosts

Timothy George

During the past twenty years America's largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, has undergone a major upheaval and reorientation, a time of turmoil and schism known to many of its participants simply as The Controversy. At the national denominational level, The Controversy is over for all practical purposes. The conservatives have won and the moderates have largely accepted that fact, most with resignation, some with resistance. The resisters have formed in protest new infra-denominational networks, the success of which has been relatively modest thus far. But the roots of The Controversy, how it came about, what was at stake, and how this relates to the theological heritage both sides still claim—all this remains up for grabs.

The partisans on both sides, of course, have simple answers to these questions. The moderates, called "liberals" by their opponents, see the conservative resurgence as an ecclesiastical coup d'état, a great power grab engineered by ruthless church politicians who neither understood nor cared about the great watchword of the Baptist tradition: freedom. For their part, the conservatives, called "fundamentalists" by their opponents, claim that The Controversy was, to quote the title of a best-selling book of the 1970s, "The Battle for the Bible." The watchword for such conservatives was biblical inerrancy, and this became the dominant theme in their successful effort to transform the theological seminaries and mission agencies of the denomination. What to the moderates seemed an obvious takeover, the conservatives saw as a much-needed turnaround.

Both of these popular explanations are too simple. Some historians have traced the roots of The Controversy to the early 1960s, when conflict over historical-critical study of the Bible produced a major crisis in the SBC leading to the dismissal of Ralph Elliott, a professor of Old Testament at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. Others have looked back to the Fundamentalist-Modernist debates of the 1920s and 1930s, which resulted in debilitating splits among Baptists and Presbyterians in the North. Still others have blamed the persistent racism of Southern religion, the cultural captivity of Southern regionalism, the eschatological pessimism of premillennialist ideology, right-wing conspiracy theories, and so forth: There is no shortage of explanations.

The Controversy should be seen, though, in the context of even more remote Baptist battles. We are still feeling the effects of three great populist movements that ripped through Southern Baptist life in the early and middle decades of the nineteenth century: Campbellism, Landmarkism, and hyper-Calvinism. For more than a century, the forces released by these schisms have simmered beneath the surface of Southern Baptist consciousness, and they continue to frame current debates within the denomination dubbed by one historian as "God's last and only hope."

Those who lived through these theological firestorms did not underestimate their destructive effect. R. B. C. Howell (1801-1868) was one of the founders of the SBC in 1845. He served four terms as president of the Convention and was also pastor of the First Baptist Church of Nashville. Near the end of his ministry, he reviewed the history of Baptists in Tennessee and described the devastation wrought by these three movements:

> Now for the third time within forty years, the desolation of Baptist churches in Tennessee was complete. They were first rent, overthrown, and destroyed by the violence of the controversy

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> on the doctrine of predestination; they were secondly crushed and scattered by the "Reformation" of Mr. Campbell; they were thirdly severed and prostrated by the Landmark controversy. Scarcely had they begun to recover from one calamitous division when they fell into another. Will the Baptists of Tennessee ever be united, and labor together continuously in the cause of Christ?

The movements Howell mentioned were all led by powerful personalities, but they also dealt with basic issues of Baptist identity and Christian faith: namely, the balance of Scripture and tradition as norms of belief and practice (Campbellism); the nature of the true church and its identity markers (Landmarkism); and the reality of divine grace in the plan of salvation (hyper-Calvinism). The putative resolution of these issues in the nineteenth century has not prevented their resurfacing at the end of the twentieth.

Alexander Campbell was born in Ireland, educated in Scotland, and emigrated to Pennsylvania with his father, Thomas Campbell, where both were immersed as believers and affiliated with the Baptist denomination in 1812. The Campbells were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians by background, but after Alexander's wife, Dorothy, gave birth to their first child, they rejected infant baptism. Campbell was a popular speaker at Baptist gatherings and disseminated his ideas through a widely circulated paper he edited called the *Christian Baptist.*

The Campbell movement (the word "Campbellite" was a nickname coined in 1832) began as an effort to counteract the disunity of Christendom. Campbell's reforming movement was part of the larger restorationist impulse in American Protestantism. Campbell wanted to bring visible unity among all Christians and hence "restore" the true church by returning to the New Testament, which, he believed, contained a precise blueprint for church order and belief. Building on the earlier restorationist call of Barton W. Stone, Campbell led many erstwhile Baptists to leave their congregations and affiliate with his newly formed Churches of Christ.

The results of this schism are with us still; it is not uncommon to find Baptist and "Christian" churches still facing one another across town squares and village lanes throughout Tennessee and Kentucky, just as New England Congregationalists divided into Old Lights and New Lights in the eighteenth century. Why did Campbell leave the Baptists after seventeen years of ministry among them? For one thing, Campbell's stark biblical literalism led to disagreements over many aspects of church life and ministerial order. Campbell opposed, for instance, the use of instrumental music in worship and refused to call ministers by officious-sounding titles such as "Reverend" or "Doctor."

Campbell also had serious soteriological differences with the Baptists. He taught a doctrine that sounded very much like baptismal regeneration, denying the direct agency of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Indeed, Campbell would often poke fun at Baptists who talked about "getting religion" or being convicted of sin and drawn to Christ by the work of the Spirit. For Baptist awakeners in the tradition of Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and the Wesleys, this smacked of heresy or even blasphemy, ruling out what the Baptists called "an immediate work of God's grace in the heart."

A still more serious breach between Campbell and his Baptist cohorts stemmed from his outright rejection of confessions of faith. Campbell viewed religious authority according to a simple maxim: "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent." To many ears this sounded like a reaffirmation of the Reformation principle of *sola scriptura.* "My conscience is captive to the Word of God," Luther had stated at the Diet of Worms in 1521. "I can do no other." The early Protestants in Switzerland had been equally unequivocal in the second of the Ten Conclusions of Berne (1528): "The church of Christ makes no laws or commandments apart from the Word of God; hence all human traditions are not binding upon us except so far as they are grounded upon or prescribed in the Word of God." Early in his teaching career, Calvin himself had tried to dispense with non-biblical terms such as *homoousious* and *Trinitas* in favor of the unadulterated words of the inspired text. But when some of his erstwhile followers, such as Laelius and Faustus Socinus, drew quite heretical conclusions from the same texts he had quoted, Calvin found it necessary to reappropriate the historic language of classical Christian orthodoxy. Thus for all their rhetoric about "Scripture alone," Protestants in the sixteenth century, and Baptists in the seventeenth and eighteenth, not only affirmed the dogmas of the early church in the language of the ancient creeds, but also added to these classic statements their own particular confessions of faith.

By the nineteenth century, Baptists had produced many such confessions, but the one against which Campbell directed most of his ire was the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, a document printed for the Philadelphia Baptist Association by Benjamin Franklin in 1742. By the 1830s it exerted a magisterial influence among Baptists North and South. At the founding meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, each of the 293 "delegates," as they were then called, who gathered in Augusta, Georgia, belonged to churches that embraced this confessional standard.

Although he was the most important opponent of confessions of faith, Campbell was not the first Baptist to oppose their use. Some Separate or New Light

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Baptists spawned by the First Great Awakening had rejected the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, saying that they needed "no such Virgin Mary" to stand between them and God. Even earlier, some General or Arminian Baptists in England had refused to subscribe to a particular statement of faith, perhaps because they were already leaning toward the anti-Trinitarian views they later openly adopted. As historian Raymond Brown put it: "Resistance to subscription became the prelude to heterodoxy. People who refused to sign the articles came eventually to deny them and those General Baptists who were theologically uncertain ultimately became committed Unitarians."

In any event, Campbell's views were soundly rebuffed by most Baptists in his day. The Franklin Baptist Association in Kentucky commissioned a long circular letter to counter Campbell's anti-confessionalism:

> If there be any divine warrant for a church (in this day), there is a divine warrant for a Creed, as a test of union, a bond of fellowship, a fence against error, and a shield against that spirit of restless inspiration, which esteems every novelty an improvement. . . . To live, as a society, without a confession of faith has often been attempted—but we have yet to be informed of the first instance of its succeeding.
>
> We understand that the Congregational churches of Massachusetts have made the dangerous experiment, and like those who have embarked before them in the same presumptuous enterprise, they have fallen prey to dissension and heresy, to a degree equally instructive and mournful.

Obviously, the Baptists of Kentucky were looking over their shoulders at the Congregationalists of New England and the rise of nascent unitarianism among the spiritual descendants of the Pilgrims and Puritans. Thus, when James Petigru Boyce founded the first theological seminary among Southern Baptists in 1859, he required every professor in that institution to sign an explicit statement of doctrine pledging to teach "in accordance with, and not contrary to" the beliefs stated therein. He observed, "Campbellism, though checked in every direction in which it attempted to develop itself, has left no little of its leaven among us and exerts no inconsiderable influence."

By the time of Campbell's death in 1866, Baptists and the Restorationists had already gone their separate ways. Yet the lingering influence of Campbell's legacy would continue to haunt Southern Baptists. One way to interpret The Controversy of recent years is to see it as a "preachers' fight," a tug-of-war among competing clerics, a theological brouhaha that most laypeople would just as soon go away. One can imagine Campbell's appalled reaction to the kind of authority exercised by megachurch pastors or denominational executives today—or to the fact that Baptists not only continue to call their ministers "Reverend" and "Doctor" but also have de facto bishops and even a so-called "college of cardinals," as some moderate critics have dubbed conservative SBC leaders.

Two other issues raised by Campbell continue to echo among Baptists today. In the nineteenth century, Baptists rejected Campbell's watered-down doctrine of the Holy Spirit and his reductionist understanding of conversion. But in time Baptists lost touch with the older theology of awakening. Jonathan Edwards described the Northampton revival as "a surprising work of God." But there is little "surprising" about Southern Baptist revivals or evangelistic efforts anymore. While no Southern Baptist, conservative or moderate, would accept Campbell's regenerative view of baptism, one must ask whether his rationalistic scheme of salvation by correct belief and observance of proper rituals has not become more nearly the norm among many Southern Baptists.

Baptists of the nineteenth century also rejected Campbell's strong anti-confessionalism. In the early part of the twentieth century, however, the ideal of American individualism was wedded to the Baptist concept of "soul competency" resulting in the triumph of what Ralph Waldo Emerson called "the infinitude of the private mind." Many contemporary Baptists would be surprised to learn that venerable shapers of the Baptist tradition such as Andrew Fuller, Richard Furman, B. H. Carroll, and even E. Y. Mullins often spoke in an affirming way of "the Baptist creed." For example, in 1923 Mullins, the champion of "soul liberty," outlined various basic Christian beliefs (e.g., biblical inspiration, the miracles of Christ, his vicarious atonement, bodily resurrection, literal ascension, and final return) and declared before the SBC: "We believe that adherence to the above truths and facts is a necessary condition of service for teachers in our Baptist schools."

It is ironic that Campbell's slogan, "No creed but the Bible," has become a shibboleth of Baptist identity among many of the denominational descendants of those who stoutly opposed it in Campbell's day. SBC conservatives have much history on their side when they argue for a robust Baptist confessionalism, but they depart from the historic Baptist pattern when they restrict their doctrinal concern to the single issue of biblical inerrancy. The early Baptist confessions were much richer and full-orbed. For example, the English Baptist confession of 1679 reproduced the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds, declaring that all three "ought thoroughly to be received and believed." "For we believe that they may be proved by most undoubted authority of Holy Scripture and are necessary to be understood of all Christians."

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Still, Baptists never advocated *credalism*. Throughout their history, Baptists of all persuasions have been ardent supporters of religious liberty, opposing state-imposed religious conformity and the attendant civil sanctions associated therewith. Believing God alone is the Lord of the conscience, Baptists deny that civil magistrates have any legitimate authority to regulate or coerce the internal religious life of voluntary associations. Baptists are non-credal in another sense as well: they deny that any humanly constructed doctrinal statement can be equal to, much less elevated above, Holy Scripture. But this principle, sacred to Baptists through the ages, is fully compatible with voluntary, conscientious adherence to an explicit doctrinal standard, precisely the issue at stake in the controversy with Campbell. All confessional traditions are liable to lapse into legalism, a charge SBC moderates have leveled against conservatives, sometimes with just cause. But confessionless Christianity poses an even greater danger. Forsaking the distilled wisdom of the past makes every man's hat his own church.

If Campbell's ideal was to reestablish the true New Testament church, Landmarkism asserted that Baptist churches had maintained unbroken continuity through the ages. There was no need to restore the true church; Baptists had never lost it. In this view, Baptist churches were the only true churches that had ever existed in the world, all others being mere human "societies" or apostate deviations from the Baptist norm.

An elaborate Landmark historiography was developed to bolster this claim. A popular expression of this perspective was set forth in J. M. Carroll's *The Trail of Blood*, a remarkable pamphlet still in print nearly seventy-five years after its initial publication. In dramatic fashion, Carroll sweeps into the Baptist march through the centuries numerous dissenting, heretical, and schismatic groups from the second through the sixteenth centuries: the Cathari, the Novationists, the Donatists, the Paulicians, the Acephali, the Paternines, the Petrobrusiani, the Henricians, the Arnoldists, the Albigenses, the Waldensians, the Lollards, the Anabaptists, and on and on. All of these groups, he claimed, had really been true Baptist churches because they practiced believers' baptism by immersion and were persecuted by the tyrannical Roman Catholic hierarchy.

Baptist successionism might have remained a relatively small tributary among Baptists in the South had it not been for James Robinson Graves, its chief protagonist and promoter. A native of New England, Graves descended on the South with the force of a tornado, determined to restore the "old landmarks" of the faith. With spellbinding oratory, he preached a rigid, exclusive Baptist ecclesiology. Like Campbell, Graves was also a successful writer and editor of his own paper, the *Tennessee Baptist*.

In an age of intense denominational conflict, Landmarkism reinforced Baptist tendencies to isolation and separatism. If Baptist churches were the only true churches, it followed that Baptist ministers were the only true ministers, and Baptist "ordinances" the only true sacraments. This had practical implications. Many Baptist churches refused to practice open communion or accept the "alien immersion" of prospective members even from other credobaptist denominations. Many Baptist pastors also refused to hold "pulpit affiliation" with non-Baptist ministers. All of this ran counter to the historic Baptist doctrine of the universal church, invisible and indivisible, the one Body of Christ scattered throughout time as well as space. In his 1849 manual on *Church Polity*, J. L. Reynolds defined the church in this wider sense: "It is this community of believers, the household of God, the whole family in Heaven and Earth, that constitutes the Holy Catholic Church, the kingdom of Christ in its internal development."

Landmarkism posed a serious challenge to interdenominational cooperation between Baptists and other mainline evangelical traditions. Yet Baptists arguably had benefited more than any other group from the First Great Awakening (1740-1760), an interdenominational extravaganza if ever there was one. Interdenominational cooperation bolstered all the arms—education, benevolence, and missions—of the SBC. This sort of evangelical synergism became increasingly difficult with the rise of Landmarkism (which also coincided with the controversy over slavery, the separation of Northern and Southern Baptists, and the Civil War).

Around the turn of the century, the staunchest Landmark advocates separated from the SBC to form their own denominations, which continue to this day, largely centered in Arkansas and Texas. Many congregations within the SBC still practice closed communion and insist on re-baptizing new members who come from non-Baptist traditions. But the greatest influence of Landmarkism in Southern Baptist life is a deep-seated antipathy to anything that smacks of ecumenism.

The Controversy, however, has posed a new challenge to Baptist isolation and anti-ecumenism. Three of the most nationally visible Southern Baptist leaders over the past thirty years, each of them claimed as allies by SBC conservatives, are Billy Graham, Carl F. H. Henry, and Charles Colson. Yet each is primarily identified with the larger evangelical, i.e., interdenominational, constituency, not with internal Southern Baptist structures.

How can Southern Baptists with their strong Landmark suspicions relate to the wider evangelical community? One way to understand The Controversy is to see it, in some measure, as the "evangelicalizing" of the SBC. The evidence for this phenomenon is

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incontestable: the influx of non-SBC evangelical scholars into Baptist seminaries; the changing of the name of the Baptist Sunday School Board to the more generic LifeWay Christian Resources; the presence and high profile of non-Baptist leaders on SBC platforms, e.g., the closing message at the 1998 SBC delivered by Dr. James Dobson, a Nazarene; the aggressive participation of the SBC's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission as an advocate for the conservative side of the culture wars conflict; new patterns of cooperation between SBC mission boards and evangelical ministries such as Promise Keepers, Campus Crusade for Christ, the National Association of Evangelicals, Prison Fellowship, and World Vision.

The cooperation between Southern Baptists and evangelicals signals a new day, but it may also come with a price, namely, the diminution of Baptist identity and a sense of uprootedness from a particular tradition. This concern has been voiced by some SBC moderates who have long resisted the coopting of the SBC by evangelicals. For example, back in 1976, the "Year of the Evangelical" that witnessed the election of born-again President Jimmy Carter, an SBC moderate leader protested the easy identification of Southern Baptists and evangelicals: "We are *not* evangelicals. That's a Yankee word. They want to claim us because we are big and successful and growing every year. But we have our own traditions, our own hymns, and more students in our seminaries than they have in all of theirs put together." While this sounds like simple old-fashioned Southern Baptist brag and strut, it reveals a more deep-rooted concern for an evaporating sense of identity in an increasingly post-denominational world.

The ghost of J. R. Graves still stalks the Southern Baptist Zion, forcing a new generation to face old questions about the marks of the church and the limits of Christian fellowship. "Baptists have never dissented from anything but sin," said Graves. We are "not Protestants, but have been, in all ages, the repudiators of Popery." Sectarianism and anti-Catholicism are not dead in Baptist life, but the new alignments brought about by The Controversy continue to challenge old stereotypes. Thus in 1994 the SBC commended a Roman Catholic nun, Mother Teresa, for her stirring rebuke of (Southern Baptist!) President Clinton and voted to include the text of her speech on the sanctity of human life in its annual record.

Modern historians have isolated two distinct beginnings of the English Baptist movement: the General Baptists, who evolved out of a church started by John Smyth, a Separatist refugee who rebaptized himself and his exiled congregation at Amsterdam in 1609; and the Particular Baptists, who arose among the underground London congregations of the 1630s. The General Baptists stressed the universal scope of the atonement, holding with the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius that Christ died indiscriminately for all persons. The Particular Baptists, on the other hand, were strict Calvinists who agreed with the doctrines propounded by the Synod of Dort (1618-19), with its assertions of Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, the Irresistibility of grace, and the Perseverance of the saints (TULIP). In the early decades of their coexistence, the debates between Calvinist and Arminian Baptists were intense, not unlike the disputes between fundamentalists and liberals in this century.

The same debates were replayed among Baptists in America, with the consensus tilting strongly, though never unanimously, toward the Reformed side of the ledger. Baptists of this period were not overly concerned about *how* one reconciled the sovereignty of God and human responsibility. The friendship and cooperation between the Arminian John Wesley and the Calvinist George Whitefield during the First Great Awakening had shown that the two groups could work together in evangelism and make common cause for the evangelical movement.

In the early nineteenth century, however, a new and virulent strain of hyper-Calvinism made strong inroads among Baptists in America, leading to major disruptions of fellowship and outright schism. A system of thought originating among British Congregationalists in the early eighteenth century, hyper-Calvinism promoted the doctrine of eternal justification. The elect were not only chosen in Christ from all eternity, they were actually justified before they were born, quite apart from repentance, faith, and a personal response to Christ and the gospel. This view appeared to undermine the urgency of personal conversion and the importance of the historicity of the Incarnation itself. The Philadelphia Confession of Faith, echoing the Westminster Confession, rejected it plainly: "God did from all eternity decree to justify all the elect . . . nevertheless, they are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them."

Hyper-Calvinists also rejected "duty-faith," the teaching that unconverted sinners who hear the gospel proclaimed have a duty to repent and believe in Jesus Christ. This view in turn led them to oppose the open, promiscuous preaching of the gospel: it was useless to exhort unconverted sinners to do what they neither could do nor indeed had any obligation to do. On these theological grounds, hyper-Calvinists thwarted efforts to promote missions, evangelism, Sunday Schools, theological seminaries, and other humanly contrived devices that seemed to them unwarranted intrusions into the sovereign work of the Spirit.

Among Baptists on the American frontier, these views were forcefully presented by Daniel Parker (1781-1844), a man of slight build with a beard streaked with tobacco stains, who set forth his ideas in *Views on the Two Seeds* (1826). Based on his read-

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ing of Genesis 3:15, Parker claimed that two seeds, "the seed of the woman" and "the seed of the serpent," had entered the human bloodstream resulting in a fatalistic bifurcation of the human race. Two-seed-in-the-Spirit predestinarian Baptists claimed that Christ and his elect ones were born of the pure seed of the woman, while the non-elect reprobates were doomed because they had within them the seed of the serpent.

It is not difficult to see why Baptists intent on winning the frontier for Christ had little sympathy for this teaching. Back in England, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, a Calvinistic Baptist of the first rank, claimed such views had "chilled many churches to their soul." Like Spurgeon, early Southern Baptist leaders rejected hyper-Calvinistic theology with its anti-missionary bent, while embracing distinctively Reformed views on predestination, perseverance, and particular redemption.

Today there is a growing interest in Reformed theology within the SBC. While most Southern Baptist Calvinists have been sympathetic to the conservative resurgence, the two movements are by no means equivalent. Some moderates are also Calvinists, while some conservatives fear that missions and evangelism will be undercut by such a strong emphasis on God's sovereignty. One SBC conservative leader was reported to have remarked several years ago: "Once we get rid of the liberals, we are going after the Calvinists!" But, to the chagrin of their detractors, Southern Baptist conservatives have thus far avoided such a fratricidal crusade.

Various explanations have been offered for the recent revival of interest in Calvinist theology in Baptist life. One suggests that an age of transition and anxiety such as ours naturally finds attractive a system of thought offering dogmatic certainty and security. Another cites renewed interest in the Bible: Once the question of biblical authority is settled, it becomes urgently important to investigate what the Bible actually teaches about salvation, grace, and election.

But a strongly Calvinist undercurrent has always been present just beneath the surface of traditional Baptist piety. This is evident in every Baptist's favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace," written by the Anglican Calvinist and former slave trader, John Newton. Something of the Calvinism shaped by the hardships of the frontier still marks Baptist spirituality in the South, especially among African Americans and poor whites who have been taught by experience to know that nothing is assured in this life, and everything good in it is a surprise, a gift. Although not articulated in technical terms, the Calvinist doctrine of divine providence is at the heart of numerous spirituals and gospel hymns such as "His Eye is on the Sparrow" and "Precious Lord, Take My Hand, Lead Me On, Let Me Stand."

The renewed vigor with which Southern Baptists are engaging issues of public policy also draws on a distinctively Reformed critique of culture. For example, SBC leader Richard Land, while far from a strict Calvinist, studied ethics with Paul Ramsey at Princeton and was greatly influenced by the Reformed apologist Francis Schaeffer.

As a Reformed theologian, I sympathize with efforts to recover the Reformation roots of the Baptist heritage, including a strong theological commitment to the sovereignty of God and the doctrines of grace. Reformed Southern Baptists, however, should not forget the real dangers of hyper-Calvinism and the deep scars it has left on the psychic memory of the denomination. Luther Rice, himself both an advocate of a high predestinarian theology and a leading missionary statesman among Baptists in America, left these wise words of counsel:

> How absurd it is, therefore, to contend against the doctrines of election, or decrees, or divine sovereignty. Let us not, however, become bitter against those who view this matter in a different light, nor treat them in a supercilious manner; rather let us be gentle towards all men. For who has made us to differ from what we once were? Who has removed the scales from our eyes?

On the brink of the millennium, the SBC remains America's largest Protestant denomination, some sixteen million strong. The internal struggle of the last two decades has resulted not in fragmentation, but realignment: Jerry Falwell, a bitter foe of the old, moderate-dominated SBC, was a voting delegate at last year's convention. The conservative resurgence has reversed the denominational drift to the left, at least for the time being. The greatest threats to the SBC today are complacency and amnesia.

Both Campbellism and Landmarkism were strong anti-institutional forces. They emphasized the priority of the local church over all extra-congregational enterprises. In an era of localism and regional autonomy, today's SBC leaders face an increasingly difficult challenge in beating the drum for denominational loyalty. The conservative movement itself was a grassroots revolution against moderate elites who long ignored the legitimate concerns of their constituency. But the replacement of one set of bureaucrats with another does not a reformation make. The same populist forces that swept the moderates from control can also turn against the current regime should it cease to hear the vox populi that placed it in power.

Campbell's anti-confessionalism is still championed as a badge of Baptist identity by SBC moderates in exile, although the limits of their libertarianism have been tested by the culture wars. Recently, the moderate-led state Baptist Convention in Texas moved to oust from its fellowship a congregation in

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Austin that had blessed same-sex unions. The revival of confessionalism poses a different challenge for mainstream conservative Baptists, namely, how to use historic documents of the church in passing on the faith to the rising generation.

For decades Southern Baptists have ignored the systematic religious instruction of young people, assuming that a pious experience of "Jesus in my heart" would suffice. The SBC has nothing comparable to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, despite the fact that the first item published by the Baptist Sunday School Board in 1891 was called "a Baptist catechism." If confessions of faith are to have a shaping role in Baptist life, they must be integrated into the didactic and liturgical mission of the church and not used merely as instruments of doctrinal correctness. It remains to be seen whether conservative Southern Baptists can translate their political victory in the convention into a living tradition of genuine reformation.

The Landmark impulse in Baptist life has been fed by strong nativist tendencies and a virulent anti-Catholicism. This explains in part the furor within the SBC over the participation of two denominational leaders in the original Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) process. Landmarkism is still alive and well in the Baptist hinterland, but the increasing acceptance of interdenominational ministries and programs within the SBC has reduced its grip on the Baptist soul. While extremist moderates are being drawn more and more into the orbit of mainline Protestantism, centrist moderates, many of whom hold a high view of biblical authority, may find new common ground with irenic conservatives through joint ventures in evangelism, social ministry, and witness in public life. In this context, a new ecumenism that seeks to foster mutual understanding without compromising biblical truth may gain a better hearing in the future than it has had in the past.

The recovery of the Calvinist tradition in Baptist life can serve as protection against sectarian and isolationist impulses. The Reformers of the sixteenth century, including Calvin, never saw themselves as ecclesial innovators or creators of new churches. They wanted to reform the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic church on the basis of the Word of God. This is also the genius of the Reformed Baptist movement, with its stress on divine sovereignty in salvation and the continuity of God's elect people through the ages. Calvinism, of course, has its own sectarian edges: it can degenerate into a graceless polemic about the doctrine of grace with little evidence of the reality of the thing argued about. Calvinists within the SBC will gain a better hearing for Reformed theology if they can combine their zeal for doctrinal purity with a passion for evangelism and a love for the brethren, including those who may not ring all five (TULIP) bells in quite the same way they do.

Baptist historian Walter Shurden has observed that "to fight over your heritage is not a good way to learn about it; but even that is better than ignoring it altogether." Baptists have always been a fractious and fissiparous folk. There is no reason to think that this will no longer be the case once the infighting stemming from The Controversy has ceased (which will not likely happen until most of the veterans have died). My hope is not for the removal of conflict, but for the elevation of dialogue, for the kind of substantive historical and theological engagement that has always been central to the cultivation of a vibrant Christian orthodoxy. This is a distinctive mark of the Baptist tradition at its best. FT

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A Christian University: Defining the Difference

Mark R. Schwehn

The title of George Marsden's most recent book on Christian higher education referred to the idea of Christian scholarship as "outrageous." For many people, the idea of a Christian university is even more so. Judging by the recent resurgence of interest in and care for church-related colleges and universities of all descriptions, the idea of a Christian university is very much alive. Even so, since the 1960s, most academics have regarded serious Christian universities as Harvey Cox regarded them at that time—as medieval remnants at best and as oxymorons at worst.

The generation that has passed since the 1960s has, however, witnessed several important, often ironic, cultural changes both inside and outside of the academy, among secularists as well as religious people, that have altered appreciatively the context for a consideration of the idea of a Christian university. I shall mention four of the more recent and significant of these changes as a way of setting out my own interpretation of our present situation, and I shall then move on to characterize what I think must be the features of, and to some extent the grounds for, the idea of a Christian university in our time. And I shall proceed in this endeavor partly through a conversation with John Henry Cardinal Newman's classic nineteenth-century discourse on the issue, *The Idea of a University.*

The four significantly pertinent changes in the contours of American culture since the early 1980s, I think, are these: First, we have experienced an immense outpouring of books and articles on the secularization of the American academy over the course of the last century, some of these offering a master narrative of the process, others supplying additions and corrections to that story. Second, many American intellectuals have gradually moved from a sense that there exists in American society a simple, two-sided culture war to a more nuanced sense that we are in the midst of a reconfiguration of public discourse about a whole range of issues, including issues of religion and higher education. Third, as arguments about how best to transform sheer diversity into flourishing pluralism have grown more intricate and insistent, a renewed, if tentative, appreciation for a plurality of institutions within the general field of higher education has emerged. And finally, there has arisen among an increasingly large number of secular intellectuals a deep suspicion, often a total abandonment, of any claims to universality or to species-centered discourse as warrants either for epistemological notions like objectivity or for moral and political notions like human rights and human dignity. Where these ideals have remained intact, they have increasingly been explicated and justified with reference to particular historical formations, some of them very large and of very long duration but never coextensive with humanity itself. As one scholar has put it succinctly, we have witnessed since the '60s and '70s, among an increasing number of American intellectuals, "the diminution of species-centered discourse and the enlargement of ethnos-centered discourse."

The story of the secularization of the academy found classic expression a few years back in George Marsden's widely acclaimed, ambitious, and largely persuasive interpretation of that process, *The Soul of the American University.* Two recent qualifications to that interpretation should be noted, however. The first qualification is by way of supplement to Marsden's narrative. In a highly suggestive article, "Thinking on One's Own: Catholicism in the American Intellectual Imagination, 1928-1960," the histo-

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rian John McGreevy has shown how a widespread concern among liberal intellectuals about "Catholic power" helped to define the terms of American liberalism for most of this century. That definition included a sharp separation between religion, understood as an entirely private matter, and public life, and the firm conviction that only "an emphasis upon individual autonomy, thinking on one's own, would sustain American democracy." Indeed, a University of Chicago philosopher a half century ago insisted that only a nondogmatic religion was appropriate to the democratic faith, even as one of his colleagues defined "intolerance" in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* as "the refusal to appraise social policies in a tentative experimental manner" and went on to identify Catholicism as the prime example of intolerance on the grounds that "a religious institution claiming universal validity and essential changelessness for its doctrine of salvation is necessarily intolerant."

The second qualification to Marsden's account comes more by way of correction and, to some extent, reproof. In "Jewish Intellectuals and the De-Christianization of American Public Culture in the Twentieth Century," historian of ideas David Hollinger endeavors to account for the transition from a dominantly Protestant culture "to the acceptance, however gradual and in some cases grudging, of a pluralism in which Christianity is acknowledged to be but one of several legitimate religious persuasions in America." In a searching analysis of the role of both religious and nonreligious Jews in this de-Christianizing process, Hollinger reminds us of one of the uglier aspects of erstwhile Protestant hegemony in the American university, namely, the exclusion of Jews and the long-held suspicion of a Jewish presence in precisely those areas of academic life, such as philosophy and history, that are in some sense responsible for constituting and transmitting culture.

These writings of Marsden, McGreevy, and Hollinger, taken together with those of many other historians and sociologists, have replaced conventional stories of a dualistic struggle between the forces of religion and the forces of secularization with a much more complicated narrative. The frequently divergent lines of Will Herberg's triple melting pot—Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish—have, over the course of the last century, intersected with the several scientific and philosophical sources of secularization at sometimes eccentric angles, yielding a bewildering set of shifting conflicts and alliances between and among these three religious groups and only rarely if ever a pitched battle between religion and secularity.

Nor is it any longer either accurate or helpful to envision the whole process of secularization as one of declension from a time of religious intensity to a time of atheistic scientism. Indeed, Hollinger insists that his own discussion of de-Christianization should properly be framed by a larger question about the astonishing persistence and durability of Christianity in America by comparison to its drastic attenuation in the rest of the industrialized world. If we add to this consideration two further facts—the growing number of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists in our midst, and what John Coleman has called the "exponentially exploding regimes of spirituality"—we can begin to see how difficult it is to describe, much less to assess with any degree of certainty, the present religious condition of our society.

It is perhaps equally difficult to make confident pronouncements about the present state of religion in the academy today. It may be time to acknowledge, however, that the "secularization of the academy" hypothesis is by now not so much mistaken as it is unfruitful. Christian educators should in any case pursue cultural agendas, as Marsden himself has done more recently, that are less defensive in their approach. To that end I will quickly sketch out what I take to be some of the minimal constitutional requirements for a Christian university, and then develop in some detail five substantive features of the Christian university so constituted. In this latter regard, I shall follow Newman's example. His idea of a university was ideally constructed, not empirically discovered, and this strategy spared him, as it will spare me, the need constantly to defend my proposals with reference to actual practice. Even so, such ideals are always articulated within particular cultural contexts, and must to some extent be shaped by and responsive to those contexts.

First, the minimal constitutional requirements for a Christian university. It must have a board of trustees composed of a substantial majority of Christian men and women, clergy and lay, whose primary task is to attend to the Christian character of the institution. They will do this primarily but not exclusively by appointing to the major leadership positions of the school persons who are actively committed to the ideal of a Christian university. These leaders will in turn see to it that all of the following things are present within the life of the institution: first, a department of theology that offers courses required of all students in both biblical studies and the Christian intellectual tradition; second, an active chapel ministry that offers worship services in the tradition of the faith community that supports the school but that also makes provision for worship by those of other faiths; third, a critical mass of faculty members who, in addition to being excellent teacher-scholars, carry in and among themselves the DNA of the school, care for the perpetuation of its mission as a Christian community of inquiry, and understand their own callings as importantly bound up with the well-being of the immediate community; and fourth, a curriculum that includes a large number of courses, required of all

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students, that are compellingly construed as parts of a larger whole and that taken together constitute a liberal education. The precise specification of these constitutional requirements must be left to enlightened leadership and the prayerful and prudential exercise of faculty judgment.

As to the particular attributes of the Christian university, I begin with "unity." By unity, I refer simply to a constitutive belief that the cosmos, having proceeded from a Creator, is thereby and in that sense unified. To confess, in the words of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth," is one thing. To explain what this means and how it ought to work itself out in the practices of organizing a university is another. To some degree this constitutive belief raises more questions than it resolves. Does, for example, the notion of cosmos suggest that everything is reducible finally to one thing, to matter or to spirit? In other respects, however, the constitutive belief informs the official rhetoric of the university over against rival metaphysical and epistemological views. Thus the belief in a Creator would seem to preclude a purely materialist metaphysic as well as certain extreme constructivist beliefs to the effect that human beings really do make the world. The education offered at a Christian university must be understood to involve both discovery and invention, both grateful wonder at what has been given to us in creation and concerted endeavor to make things new.

An informing principle like "unity" really does make the Christian university countercultural in the modern world. When Henry Adams observed in *The Education of Henry Adams* that in working from unity to multiplicity he had to reverse the direction taken by St. Augustine some fifteen centuries before him, he was correct. And he understood very well that the fragmented, disconnected, and alienated life that he both lived and then redescribed for his readers was to a large extent the product of the disappearance of God and the emergence of new metaphysics driven by science and technology. Though Adams might have himself doubted the efficacy of the project, he would surely have agreed that part of the mission of the Christian university must be a quest for unity, an undertaking to find ways of seeing and knowing what the Christian believes is, in a profound and mysterious sense, there already.

The second constitutive belief of a Christian university is that all human beings, everywhere and at all times, are made in the image of God and loved in the way that God loves, i.e., in a manner best exemplified in the life and death of Jesus the Christ. I describe this constitutive belief as "universality" to distinguish it from the view mentioned earlier, namely, the view that all species-centered discourse should be replaced by ethnos-centered discourse, the latter referring always and only to the views of a particular tribe or community rather than to what truly holds universally for the human species. Like unity, universality may raise more questions than it answers. What does it mean in a given case to love as God loves? What does it mean to be created in God's image? How and to what extent does this belief inform the way we should order the Christian university's common life? Has it any application, for example, to principles of university governance or to personnel issues or to the rules governing residence hall life?

There are of course any number of liberal intellectuals who would wish to defend and even to promote similar informing principles, such as a belief in universal human rights or a belief that all human beings are by nature entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. Since around 1980, however, many of these liberal intellectuals, notably the philosopher Richard Rorty, have gone to considerable lengths to insist that universalist aspirations such as these are but the idols of particular tribes of modern Western democracies. This insistence that all talk of universal human rights and dignity is really a kind of ethnocentrism has had worrisome implications, a point that Rorty himself indirectly concedes. In a 1983 essay Rorty ponders how citizens of a Western democracy would respond to a hypothetical child found wandering in the woods as the sole survivor of a nation whose culture and religion have been destroyed. Such a child would have, Rorty says, "no share in human dignity," since the child's moral community no longer exists. But under the ministrations of Westerners, this stranger would surely be "reclothed with dignity," because "the Jewish and Christian element in our tradition" contains certain universalist ideals—ideals that are still "gratefully invoked," he admits, "by free-loading atheists like myself."

Candid accounts like this and a surrounding sense among many thoughtful observers that gestures of good will toward other human beings in need seem increasingly arbitrary and sporadic rather than dutiful and habitual have led to a new variation on the classical form of the jeremiad. One example comes from the posthumously published collection of essays by the widely influential American intellectual historian and cultural critic Christopher Lasch. "Modernism," Lasch wrote, "continues to live off the capital of the creeds it has rejected, and the most admirable among modernist intellectuals . . . have always been aware of this dependence—even when, like Freud, they were urging their readers to outgrow it." Another example comes from the Catholic philosopher Charles Taylor, who wrote in his book *Sources of the Self*: "The question . . . is whether we are not living beyond our moral means in continuing allegiance to our standards of justice and benevolence. Do we have ways of seeing-good which are still credible to us, which are powerful enough to sustain the standards?"

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Even if all these worries are exaggerated and even if religion does not in fact temper and improve human sentiments, it would still seem important for the health of a pluralistic, democratic society that there should exist institutions of higher learning whose mission involves a continual renewal of those practices, stories, and teachings that have inspired the proclamation and elaboration of certain liberating universal truths, making sense of them in theory and sustaining them in practice.

My third informing principle, "integrity," involves the belief that there is an integral connection among the intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions of human life, and that these therefore ought where possible to be addressed concurrently within a single institution rather than parceled out into separate and often conflicting realms. Integrity refers to a kind of wholeness, an internal balance and harmony in the operation of the moral, spiritual, and intellectual virtues. A Christian university, like any university, must surely subordinate all other endeavors to the improvement of the mind in its pursuit of truth. Unlike many other universities, however, a Christian university believes that this pursuit is best undertaken within a community that also attends to the moral and the spiritual.

Indeed, some of the moral and spiritual virtues have vital cognitive significance and hence strengthen the practices of both teaching and learning. An arrogant teacher, for example, no matter how well he understands organic chemistry, is apt to be unresponsive to students and impatient with their errors and hesitations. Humility, therefore, is both a spiritual excellence and a pedagogical virtue. It would be a worthy project to articulate in a more systematic fashion those virtues whose exercise is most important for good teaching and to rank them accordingly. They would surely include—in addition to humility—faith, justice, courage, prudence, temperance, honesty, and, perhaps above all, charity. Indeed, my favorite brief account of the vocation of teaching has become the unofficial motto of the honors college where I teach. It comes from the eleventh century St. Bernard of Clairvaux: "Some seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge: that is curiosity; others seek knowledge that they may themselves be known: that is vanity; but there are still others who seek knowledge in order to serve and edify others, and that is charity."

My own practice as a historian has demonstrated to me the cognitive value of such virtues as justice and charity. I have in mind here criticism I have received or that I have leveled at myself regarding my thinking about, say, William James, a figure long dead: "You have really not done James full justice in your discussion of his religious views." Or again, "You really need to be more charitable to James in your analysis of his courtship and marriage."

Notice that the vocabulary of moral and spiritual virtue—here justice and charity—easily insinuates itself into appraisals of thought as well as action. If I have grown to treat my colleagues and students with justice and charity, I am surely more apt to treat historical subjects like William James in the same manner. And such treatment should improve the quality of my historical thinking. The exercise of charity toward my historical subjects is bound to make me a better historian—more cautious in appraisal, more sympathetic with human failings, less prone to stereotype and caricature. And insofar as this is so, the manner of teaching others to think historically ought to cultivate, at least through force of example, the virtue of charity.

There are surely countless nonreligious students and teachers who are just, charitable, and humble in their dealings with one another and with their subjects. Newman nevertheless insisted that a virtue like humility depended, finally, upon religious conviction. And it was, he thought, especially difficult to achieve genuine humility within the university. More accurately, humility could not be, for Newman, an achievement, the result of willful exertion—that was modesty; rather, humility arose in the soul as a natural accompaniment of religious affections such as awe and reverence before the greatness and majesty of God. "Knowledge," Newman wrote, "viewed as Knowledge, exerts a subtle influence in throwing us back on ourselves and making us our own center, and our minds the measure of all things." And indeed, the development of a sometimes aggressive secular humanism had already gathered considerable momentum throughout the century during which Newman lived and wrote. Though he could and did rhapsodize about liberal learning for its own sake and about the possibility of universal knowledge, he believed that the gentleman, the best product of a liberal education, fell considerably short of the mark primarily because, though modest enough, he lacked the virtue of humility.

I myself doubt that Christianity has a singular purchase upon the virtues of charity and humility. I would nevertheless insist that insofar as integrity is a proper aspiration of a Christian university, that university must in some way provide for the concurrent development of moral, spiritual, and intellectual virtue. In my own college, we seek to appoint faculty who are ready and willing to minister to those crises of faith that arise, for example, as young men and women read biblical texts together with the sacred scriptures of other traditions, with meticulous attention initially to a reading of what the text says, apart from whatever might be the student's own received traditions of interpretation.

We understand the position that it is the church's business, not the university's, to minister to these spiritual quandaries, and we are, I think, even more

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insistent than some Christian colleagues outside our college that Valparaiso is a university, not a church, and that hence we are not about the business of the salvation of souls. Even so, we do not think it right or intellectually responsible to erode the often fragile foundations of students' religious beliefs, however inadvertently, without being present with them to provide guidance, counsel, insight, and encouragement along the way. This is not to suggest that each and every faculty member, or even a majority of them, should be selected with an eye directed in part to their pastoral gifts. Such pastoral care is concentrated in various places at church-related schools—in residential ministries, in pastoral counseling offices, and among several faculty who pursue this task as something of an avocation.

I think that Newman was right, however, in seeking, wherever possible, to combine the offices of pastoral care with those of intellectual training. A Christian university not only may but *must* see to it that its students are enabled, if they are willing and eager for it, to approximate the ideal expressed in one of the pamphlets that were part of the Tractarian movement and that might well have been written by Newman: "The fullest and freest development of the intellect, joined to the most cheerful and implicit submission of the whole man to God's will, this is surely the highest triumph which a system of education can achieve."

The three informing principles thus far considered—unity, universality, and integrity—coincide loosely with the work of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, and hence suggest an orthodox, Trinitarian conception of a Christian university. Many of my own coreligionists, perhaps *especially* my own coreligionists, would want zealously to contest this ideal, sometimes on Christian grounds. Their arguments would sometimes appeal to critical ideas by Christian writers, and these writers taken together would constitute a tradition.

Thus my fourth and perhaps most obvious informing principle: A Christian university privileges and seeks to transmit, through its theology department, its official rhetoric, the corporate worship it sponsors, and in myriad other ways, a particular tradition of thought, feeling, and practice. Rival ideas of the university, most recently the one offered by Martha Nussbaum in her book *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, often construe tradition of any kind as inimical to the kind of free inquiry that is the heart and soul of university life. There would seem to be at least two difficulties with this view. First, an increasing number of students come to the university without any sense of any tradition whatsoever. In an era of mass media, celebrity hype, spin control, and the breakdown of the very institutions that used to transmit tradition, it seems at least peculiar constantly to worry, as Nussbaum does, that we today might be in danger of reinstating something like the old-style Athenian education that Socrates rejected.

Tradition and critical inquiry frequently clash, but it is important to notice that they most often exist in a relationship of dialectical interdependence. Criticism responds to something—to opinion, dogma, custom, convention, tradition. And tradition, whether construed by Alasdair MacIntyre as an institutionally embodied argument extended over time, or by Jaroslav Pelikan as the living faith of the dead, incorporates criticism into the body of its life over time.

So our alternatives are not between tradition and critical inquiry. Instead, they often take the form of more complicated choices. Shall we live and work and think within a context alive to the conflicts between the extraordinarily variegated tradition that Christianity represents on the one hand, and the best of the Socratic tradition of critical and self-critical inquiry on the other? Shall we at one extreme languish in a state of traditionalism—the dead faith of the living, to quote Pelikan once more—or, at the other extreme, languish in a state of anomie borne of traditionless criticism feeding perpetually upon itself, issuing in mere cleverness at best and in skeptical nihilism at worst?

It should go without saying that the Christian tradition must itself be critically examined by Christians and non-Christians alike. The rhythms of intellectual life at a Christian university include both a relentless questioning of what we believe and a believing of that which we question. Many of those for whom the privileging of the Christian tradition cannot possibly be justified on the basis of the essential truth of that tradition's central claims (and this would include a majority of the academy) might at least concede as a possible justification the contingent fact that for most of its history the university in the West was nourished by Christian convictions.

My fifth and final feature of a Christian university is the one that is most at odds with Newman. The great cardinal insisted that the knowledge that is the proper object of study at a university is good for its own sake. Though such knowledge has profound implications for professional skill, its pursuit cannot and should not be justified, Newman argued, with reference to those implications. But our world is in this respect perhaps most different from Newman's, for most of our students come to the university primarily to prepare themselves for work, and the vast majority of them do not intend to prepare themselves either for the academy itself or for one of the learned professions—law, medicine, and divinity.

In this context, a Christian university, both by nature and necessity, construes the kind of knowledge it pursues as being for the most part both good in itself and good for the sake of something else, namely,

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to paraphrase St. Bernard again, to serve and edify others. Or, to put the matter another way, it should be a primary teaching of a Christian university that work is a social station where human beings use their God-given talents and whatever knowledge they have acquired to serve neighbors in need. This is the classical Protestant understanding of vocation, and it has significant implications for the way in which a Christian university might define human excellence.

Most accounts of human excellence suggest that human beings achieve that which is noblest and hence most worthy of praise in some particular theater of human endeavor—in ancient times on the battlefield or in political assemblies, later in the study or the studio, the laboratory or the athletic arena. Protestant Christians, however, argued that men and women were stationed in a variety of callings simultaneously. They were at one and the same time parents, citizens, neighbors, and professionals. And although most Christian thinkers usually resisted the temptation to insist upon *one* form of saintliness, more and more of them have tended, since the Reformation, to locate the exercise of virtue not so much in exceptional heroic endeavor as in the quiet and steady business of everyday life. A Christian university should therefore equip its students to perform well in all of their concurrent callings, and it should teach them to regard human life not primarily as a tragic set of impossible choices between excellence at home *or* at work *or* in civil society, but as a striving for the proper balance of exertion and achievement within all of these fields of endeavor.

Finally, of course, the Christian university must insist that, however strenuous the exertions it ordains and fosters, and however successful students may be in meeting the standards of excellence that it holds up to them, they will still fall short of the mark without the grace of God. Newman was profoundly impressed by this, and according to one account of his thought about education, he was haunted by "the paradox that one who was fit to see God might be unfit to be seen by anyone else."

The world of Oriel College, Oxford, where Newman formed the ideas that later became the substance of his discourses on the idea of the university, has vanished irretrievably. Though my own thoughts have been in part an effort to refurbish and put to use some of his insights, our own new occasions do to a considerable extent teach new duties.

Newman wrote from a position of supreme confidence that the Catholic Church was singularly equipped to nurture human beings to become truly humble and truly charitable because truly redeemed and sanctified. It was a confidence that mirrored the confidence of some of his adversaries who extolled the virtues of modern science and Enlightenment as the only paths to genuine human flourishing. Increasing numbers of the heirs of this latter group have in these days, as we have seen, begun to qualify and even to retract some of their more imperial claims. If liberal intellectuals can be chastened, so can Christian intellectuals. Just as many of the former group have sincerely confessed and subsequently renounced glib confusions of the local and the particular with the universal, so Christians today should confess that they have been altogether too ready at times to characterize an ideal, a motive, or a virtue as "distinctively Christian" when these may all in fact have many religious homes. Let me therefore emphasize two points that need perpetual reinforcement, mostly for my own coreligionists. First of all, Christianity cannot be said to be *the* source—though it is most certainly at its best *a* source—for the view that all human beings must be treated with dignity, respect, and love. And second, Christians are called after all to be faithful, not to be above all things distinctive. Hence, they should welcome convergent understandings of thought, feeling, and action instead of regarding these with suspicion as somehow compromising the special character of Christianity.

Newman was also determined to draw, in his own inimitable way, sharp and dramatic contrasts between those liberally educated men and women who were Christians and those who were not. In his eighth discourse, "The Religion of Philosophy," he seems at first to suggest that liberal learning will at least *prepare* the human heart for sanctity. But he then reverts to his more usual habit of developing pronounced distinctions between the poor powers of mere philosophy compared to the potential strength of the Christian faith to elevate human beings far above a life of sensual indulgence. "The splendors of a court, and the charms of good society, wit, imagination, taste, and high breeding, the *prestige* of rank, and the resources of wealth, are a screen, an instrument, and an apology for vice and irreligion. And thus at length we find, surprising as the change may be, that that very refinement of Intellectualism, which began by repelling sensuality, ends by excusing it."

There will be many—including myself in my more discouraged moments—who will be tempted to regard this as a prescient and eloquent epitaph for much of higher learning in the United States during our own century. But we must, I think, resist that temptation. First of all, we must again remember the darker side of Protestant hegemony that I referred to earlier. Indeed, if we had to select the one human being whose life and work over almost the entire span of the twentieth century most vividly embodied Newman's ideal of the liberally educated man, it would most likely be the late Sir Isaiah Berlin, who would have been excluded from Newman's Oxford in the nineteenth century and from many of the outstanding institutions of higher learning in the United States for a good part of the

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twentieth. But more to the point here, the example of Berlin and countless others like him should lead us all to regard skeptically the immense divide that Newman seemed to impose between knowledge and virtue.

Second, we must acknowledge that an ideal like the one I have set down is fraught with dangers, some of them easy to imagine and others, on the basis of the history of church-related higher learning, already too familiar. For it will be tempting to use my several informing principles, however true and salutary these may be, as inflexible dogmas to be used as tests for faculty appointment and promotion; even more tempting to multiply the number of informing principles to the point that the university becomes a seminary or a Bible college, losing altogether its identity as a *university*. I have been developing the idea of a *Christian* university, but had I been elaborating the idea of a Christian *university* I should have stressed ideals of liberal education, some of them very like the ideals stressed by Martha Nussbaum. It is simply a fact that Christianity has been from time to time desperately in need, within the precincts of its own colleges and universities, of the best in the tradition of liberal education and Enlightenment rationality to curb its own occasional tendencies toward dogmatic fanaticism, persecutorial zeal, and militant anti-intellectualism.

Even more to the point, and my third and most telling reason for disagreeing with Newman about the relationship between liberal education and Christianity, I believe with Charles Taylor that "modern culture, in breaking with the structures and beliefs of Christendom, also carried certain facets of Christian life further than they ever were taken, or could have been taken, within Christendom." The basic thrust of the Christian gospel has at times been carried forward under wholly secular auspices, most notably on those occasions when Christendom was itself the principal obstacle to the practical penetration of the gospel in human life. This was especially the case with respect to the cause of human freedom.

It is, of course, equally true, as Taylor also argues, that "the modern denial of transcendence can put the most valuable gains of modernity in danger." Absent any sense that the human project aims beyond itself, liberated human life can easily reduce to the negative and fruitless project of attempting to eliminate suffering and death, of denying our mortality and gazing only upon the limited horizons of self-preservation. Or, worse still, the "death of God" can lead to a Nietzschean fascination with violence and the negation of life. In sum, and contra Newman, Christianity needs liberal education and Enlightenment as much as liberal education may need Christianity.

If we agree with Taylor, we can be more sanguine about the present situation of Christianity and higher education in America. The Christian university can truly be itself only in a context of institutional pluralism, as one of several models, perhaps even a model on the margins, of university education. Christianity functions most truly and most effectively when it is disenthralled. And in this regard the life of the ideal Christian university is like unto the life of the individual Christian. Insofar as Christians relax their grip upon the reins of earthly dominion and contract the scope of their temporal ambitions, they so far increase the range of their spiritual influence and so the more steadily secure their hold upon eternity. This too should be a teaching of a Christian university. FT

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Columbus and the Beginning of the World

Robert Royal

As Orson Welles famously remarked, playing the unscrupulous Harry Lime in the film *The Third Man*: "In Italy for thirty years, under the Borgias, they had warfare, terror, murder, and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love. They had five hundred years of democracy and peace, and what did they produce? The cuckoo clock." Lime's history was more than a little vague and self-serving (Welles himself seems to have been titillated by this dangerous truth since he added it to Graham Greene's original script for the film). Fifteenth-century Italy in particular, and Europe more generally, drew their vitality from a lot more than Borgias and Machiavellianism. But it is a paradox of history that social turmoil often offers rich soil for human achievement.

The world we know began in the fifteenth century. Not the world of course in the sense of human life or human civilizations, which had already existed for millennia, but the world as a concrete reality in which all parts of the globe had come into contact with one another and begun to recognize themselves as part of a single human race—a process still underway. The spherical globe we had known about since the classical world; in the Middle Ages, readers of Dante took it for granted. Yet it was only because of a small expedition by a few men driven by a mishmash of personal ambition, religious motives, and the desire for profit that an old mathematical calculation was turned into a new human fact. Or as a historian sixty years later accurately characterized the discovery of the New World, it was "the greatest event since the creation of the world (excluding the incarnation and death of Him who created it)."

In our own confused way, we continue to pay homage to that achievement. In 1999, NASA will put a satellite into an orbit a little less than a million miles out into space at what is called L-1, the libration point where the gravity of the earth and the sun exactly balance one another. Equipped with a telescopic lens and video camera, it will provide a twenty-four-hour-a-day image of the surface of the earth. Not surprisingly, one of the enthusiasts behind the project is Al Gore, probably the most environmentally agitated public figure alive. But in spite of the damage that Gore and many others believe we humans have inflicted on the planet since our first large steps in exploring it, and despite the laments of multiculturalists about Europe's rise to world dominance, the new satellite will be called Triana, after Rodrigo de Triana, who first spotted lights on land from the deck of the Pinta during the first voyage of Columbus.

Perhaps the name is only a bow to growing Hispanic influence in the United States; perhaps it hints that we would like to think of ourselves as equally on the verge of another great age of discovery. But whatever our sense of the future, the Columbus discoveries and the European intellectual and religious developments that lay behind them are today at best taken for granted, at worst viewed as the beginning of a sinister Western hegemony over man and nature. The last five centuries, of course, offer the usual human spectacle of great glories mixed with grim atrocities. But we cannot evaluate the voyages of discovery properly—much less the fifteenth-century culture from which they sprang—without gratitude for what they achieved or understanding of their human dimensions. In the fifteenth century, the discoveries were rightly regarded as close to a miracle, especially given the way the century had begun.

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The early 1400s were marked by profound religious, political, economic, and even environmental turmoil. At one point in the first decade of the century, there were simultaneously three claimants to the papal throne and three to the crown of the Holy Roman Empire. And the large-scale institutional crises were only a small part of the story. Europe was still suffering from the devastation wrought at the height of the Black Death over half a century earlier and in smaller waves thereafter. Overall, something like 40 percent of the population disappeared in the mid-fourteenth century, in some regions even more. Land lay fallow for lack of workers, villages were deserted, poverty spread. As many modern environmentalists have devoutly wished, nature took its vengeance as human population decreased. Wolves multiplied and returned, even appearing in capital cities. Human predators—in the form of brigands—made travel unsafe over wide areas. The consequences of the retreat of civilization spurred Henry V, fabled victor of Agincourt, to offer rewards for the elimination of both types of pests. Though the beauty of landscapes emerged as never before in contemporary painting and literature, it was not a century that indulged itself in easy sentimentality about the goodness of unimproved nature, human or otherwise. On the contrary, natural hardships spurred the fifteenth century to nearly unparalleled achievements.

But if the internal situation were not enough, Europe was also being squeezed by forces from outside. In 1453, the Ottoman Turks finally succeeded in taking Byzantium. Turkish troops had already been fighting as far into the Balkans as Belgrade a few years earlier. Otranto, in the heel of Italy, fell to them in 1480 for a time. We might have expected the Christian powers to lay aside rivalries momentarily and defend themselves from an alien culture and religion. But the main Atlantic nation-states—England, France, and Spain—were still only beginning to take shape. The rest of Western Europe was broken, despite the theoretical claims of the emperor, into a crazy quilt of competing small powers. So no coordinated effort occurred, though Pius II and other popes called for a crusade. Pius even wrote to Sultan Muhammad II, conqueror of Constantinople, inviting him to convert to Christianity. Whether this letter was intended seriously or as a mere pretext for further action, it failed. Neither "European" nor "Christian" interests were sufficiently united to galvanize the effort. The Pope died in 1464 at the eastern Italian port of Ancona waiting for his people to rally behind him.

A crusade to retake the Holy Land was sometimes a mere pipe dream, sometimes a serious proposal during the course of the century. Ferdinand of Spain listened frequently to such plans, but refrained from doing much. (Machiavelli praises him in *The Prince* as one of those rulers who shrewdly take pains to appear good without necessarily being so.) Charles VIII of France invaded Italy in 1494 but also had in mind an attempt to retake Constantinople and restore the Eastern Christian Empire. Earlier, Henry V, on his way to Agincourt, proclaimed his intentions not only to assume the French throne but to "build again the walls of Jerusalem." Western Europe had a persistent if vague sense of responsibility to defend Christianity from Islamic military threats and a deeper need to recover the parts of Christendom lost to Muslim conquest, even if the good intentions were thwarted by intra-European distractions.

Had Islam continued its advance, much of Europe might have then resembled the cultures we now associate with the Middle East. The Americas might have been largely Muslim countries as opposed to largely Christian ones. Islam was more advanced than Europe in 1492, but in the paradoxical ways of culture, its very superiority contributed to its being surpassed. Muslims do not seem to have taken much interest in Western technical developments in navigation, and even well-placed countries like Morocco were never moved to brave the high seas in search of new lands. European technological innovation and military advance may have been born of necessity, given the superiority of outside cultures and the conflicts and rivalries among European nations.

This reminds us of something often overlooked in most contemporary historical surveys. The "Eurocentric" forces, of which we now hear so much criticism, were actually something quite different in the fifteenth century. What we today call "Europeans" thought of themselves as part of Christendom, and a Christendom, as we shall see, that desperately needed to return to some of its founding truths. Similarly, they did not regard themselves as the bearers of the highest culture. Ancient Greece and Rome, they knew, had lived at a higher level, which is why the Renaissance felt the need to recover and imitate classical models. The fabled wealth of the distant Orient and the clearly superior civilization of nearby Islam did not allow Christendom to think itself culturally advanced or, more significantly, to turn in on itself, as self-satisfied empires of the time such as China did. Contemporary European maps—the ones all the early mariners consulted in the Age of Discovery—bear witness to their central belief: Jerusalem, not Europe, was the center of the world.

But this very sense of threat and inferiority, combined with the unsettled social diversity of Europe at the time, gave Europeans a rich and dynamic restlessness. Not surprisingly, the rise towards a renewed Europe began in the places least affected by the population implosion and, therefore, more prosperous: what we today call the Low Countries and, above all, Northern Italy. Renascences, as Erwin Panofsky demonstrated a few decades ago, had been occurring in Europe since the twelfth century. But the one that took place in Northern Italy in the fifteenth century

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—the one we call *the* Renaissance—produced multiple and wide-ranging consequences.

Pius II was in many ways emblematic of the mid-century. A cultivated humanist born in Siena in 1405 with the imposing name Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, he initially came under the spell of St. Bernardino, who preached a strictly observant reformed Franciscan life (of which more anon). But he shortly became attracted to the exciting life of the Renaissance Italian humanists, which is to say libertinism and literary pursuits. He shifted parties among papal contenders, pursuing his own ambitions for many years, wrote a popular history (*Historia rerum ubique gestarum*) that gathered together wide-ranging facts and fictions about foreign lands, and even became imperial poet and secretary to the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III. But compared with the squabbling popes and anti-popes who preceded him and the colorful escapades of the Borgias, Pius had his virtues. He was learned and hard-working, enjoyed nature, sought reform, and could have made a difference in Europe had his office enjoyed the respect it once had and was to have again later. The religious renaissance, however, like the cultural, scientific, and artistic one with which we are more familiar, had to come from other sources.

Renaissance achievements found multiple and overlapping uses in a Europe in ferment. The geometry developed by the Florentine Paolo Toscanelli allowed Fillippo Brunelleschi, over the objections of a commission of Florentine experts, to dare construction of the unsupported dome that crowns the magnificent Florentine Duomo. Just a few decades later, an intellectually curious Genoese mariner corresponded with Toscanelli in preparation for his attempts to convince another panel of experts in Spain that it was possible to sail west to the Indies (no serious thinker at the time, by the way, believed the earth was flat). His figures were wrong; the distance was greater than he claimed. The experts—and perhaps Columbus himself—knew it. But it was an age when for various reasons people had the faith to attempt things beyond what was previously thought possible. It is worth looking closely at some of those reasons.

Much has recently been written, for example, claiming that the Christian dimension of Columbus' personality was merely a cover for greed and ambition. These alleged traits are then read as a metaphor for a hypocritical European expansion under the cover of religion. Hypocrites certainly existed in the fifteenth century, as they do today. But real history—as opposed to anachronistic morality tales—is always more complex than the simple motives we project back onto figures quite different from ourselves. Like the Italian humanists, who are often wrongly portrayed as modern unbelieving intellectuals, Columbus combined his faith with new knowledge and new interests. But that did not make his faith any less real. He wanted that Renaissance ideal, glory: in this case, that of an unprecedented voyage. He drove hard bargains with Ferdinand and Isabella to secure the financial benefits of his discoveries for himself and his descendants. (The Muslim conquests and consequent monopolies over Eastern trade routes made the European search for alternate routes all the more necessary and profitable.) Yet when all the mundane reasons have been listed, the spiritual dimension of the project remains in ways that are quite unexpected.

In the preface to his *Libro de las profecías* (Book of Prophecies), an anthology of prophetic texts that he compiled near the end of his life, Columbus relates to Ferdinand and Isabella how, long before he ever approached them, he had become convinced that the westward voyage was not merely possible but his own personal vocation:

> During this time, I searched out and studied all kinds of texts: geographies, histories, chronologies, philosoph[ies], and other subjects. With a hand that could be felt, the Lord opened my mind to the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies, and He opened my will to desire to accomplish this project. This was the fire that burned within me when I came to visit your Highnesses.

Of course, the reading alone suggests we are dealing with an unusual kind of sailor, one who, like the humanists of his day, has engaged in sifting and comparing ancient and modern knowledge for new purposes. There is some irony, then, in the fact that he claims that God intended to produce a *milagro ebidentísimo* ("highly visible miracle") in this enterprise by using an uneducated man: "For the execution of the journey to the Indies, I was not aided by intelligence, by mathematics, or by maps. It was simply the fulfillment of what Isaiah had prophesied."

Columbus clearly employed considerable intelligence, mathematical skill, and geographical knowledge in planning his route. He also knew from much experience at sea that winds in the Atlantic nearer the equator would carry him west, those to be found more to the north would take him east, back to Europe. And he was alert to other environmental signs. Late in the first voyage he turned south to follow a flock of birds that he rightly assumed were headed towards land. Without this chance or providential fact, he probably would have come ashore somewhere between Virginia and Florida instead of the Caribbean, with doubtless immensely different effects on subsequent world history.

Despite all the knowledge, abstract and practical, that Columbus brought to bear on his task, the religious intuitions he describes may strike us as bordering on delusion, on a par with the equally unexpected mystical speculations of the mathematician

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Pascal, or Newton's commentaries on the prophecies in the Book of Daniel. But anyone familiar with how prophecies have functioned throughout history knows they often work themselves out in ways their authors never envisioned. In Columbus' case, we may wish to avoid judging too quickly the "hand that could be felt" and other evidence that at times he seems to have heard something like divine locutions. They may have been delusions, intuitions, or something else moving in the depths of human history.

Far from being a later and idealized reinterpretation of his own past, Columbus' remarks are confirmed by a curious source. Recent scholars have discovered notes in Columbus' own hand dated 1481, over a decade before his first voyage, in the back of a copy of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini's (the later Pius II) *Historia rerum ubique gestarum*. There Columbus compiles a shorter list of prophecies from various sources which, it now seems perfectly clear, guided his whole life project.

Columbus' religious side seems to have grown out of a religious renaissance that occurred in fifteenth-century Europe. The *devotio moderna*, beginning with Gerard Groote and the Brethren of the Common Life, spread among both religious and lay people, calling for a return to a more personal religion modeled on the evangelical virtues of the early Church. Its best-known writer was Thomas à Kempis, whose *Imitation of Christ* (ca. 1427) has influenced numerous individuals and movements, Catholic and Protestant, over the centuries. As late as the middle of the sixteenth century, Ignatius of Loyola, for example, the founder of the Jesuits, made it the first book he read when he decided to begin a serious religious life. The *devotio moderna* shaped figures as diverse as Nicholas of Cusa and Erasmus. In many ways, it paralleled the impulses behind the secular Renaissance in its living reappropriation of the religious past as the basis for the future.

Less known, however, is the Observant or Observantine current within the fifteenth century, first among the Franciscans, but later among other orders and lay groups. In fact, one of the major religious disputes for monasteries at the time was the need to choose between strict Observant and non-reformed Conventual rules. (Martin Luther began his religious life in an Observant Augustinian community.) The Franciscans numbered among their members figures like Saint Bernardino of Siena, Saint James of the Marches, and Saint John Capistrano. Their efforts, too, looked to a religious renaissance by way of return to the more austere and humble ways of early Christianity. For our present purposes, it is also necessary to note that, mixed in with that more austere life, there were occasionally garbled versions of the millennial speculations of Joachim of Fiore, a twelfth-century Cistercian abbot, for whom a new age of the Holy Spirit and the final age of the world seemed not far distant.

We have no indisputable evidence that Columbus was a third-order Franciscan Observantine, but his way of dress in his final years in Spain appears to have been similar to theirs. When he traveled through Spain, he stayed at Franciscan monasteries rather than the homes of noblemen. Uncertainties about Columbus' early history and the history of the Observants in Spain prevent any greater precision, but it is clear that, mixed in with his other motives, he early on had absorbed some of the millennial currents of his time. Specifically, he seems to have believed that one reason to open the Western route to the Orient was to enable the gospel finally to be preached to all nations, a prerequisite to the end of the world and the triumphal second coming of Christ that some Joachimites predicted would occur in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Significantly, Columbus also seems to have believed something not found in any of Joachim's writings: that Joachim had predicted that a king of Spain would liberate the Holy Land. Though Columbus had a personal reason to keep Ferdinand and Isabella interested in the enterprise of the Indies, he also often urged them to undertake a crusade. The fact that Spain reconquered the kingdom of Granada only at the beginning of 1492 gave Spaniards a sense greater than that of most other Europeans of the need to resist Muslim incursions. In less savory forms, this sense contributed to the Inquisition's injustices to Spanish Muslims and Jews, who were expelled from Spain on the very day Columbus set sail. Columbus' urgings went unheeded, but we have good evidence of his sincerity. For the last decade of his life the various wills he made altered different clauses, but one remained constant: he directed the executors of his estate to set up a fund in Genoa's Bank of Saint George to help pay for the liberation of Jerusalem. Whatever other motives we may attribute to him, there is no question that on spiritual matters he put his money where his mouth was.

Much of this real history has been obscured for a long time by persons who found it expedient to use Columbus as a symbolic figure. For most older Americans, he was presented as a heroic proto-American, combating the obscurantism of reactionary Spanish Catholics who thought he would sail off the end of the flat earth. (As we have seen, neither Columbus nor his intellectual critics believed in such absurdities.) In that reading, he became a forerunner of American Protestantism, modern science, and capitalist enterprise. It is no great loss that we have discarded that historical illusion.

Columbus also did service as an ethnic hero for Catholics, mostly Irish and Italian, during the large waves of immigration at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. There was less harm here, because he was a true hero. Enthusi-

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asm grew so heated that on the four hundredth anniversary of his voyage in 1892 efforts were made to have him canonized. But Leo XIII, fully aware of Columbus' irregular marital situation (for reasons of inheritance he never married the woman he lived with after his wife died), contented himself with praising his human virtues: "For the exploit is in itself the highest and grandest which any age has ever seen accomplished by man; and he who achieved it, for the greatness of mind and heart, can be compared to but few in the history of humanity."

In recent years, of course, Columbus' standing as hero has come under severe assault. He and the culture he represented have been castigated for initiating the modern cultural dominance of Europe and every subsequent world evil: colonialism, slavery, cultural imperialism, environmental damage, and religious bigotry. There is a kernel of truth in these charges, but obviously to equate a single individual or a complex entity like a culture with what are currently judged to be the negative dimensions of the emergence of an interconnected human world is to do great historical injustice to both individuals and ideas.

Europeans, for example, had an ambivalent stance towards the new peoples they encountered. On the one hand, there arose almost instantaneously the beginnings of the "noble savage" myth, which had a varied career in the hands of writers like Thomas More, Montaigne, and Rousseau. On the other hand, actual experience of the new cultures revealed peoples who displayed much savagery and sometimes little nobility.

Columbus himself adhered to one side or the other in this culture war at different times in his life. In one of his first communications with the Spanish monarchs after the discovery, he described the Taínos of the Caribbean in glowing terms:

> I see and know that these people have no religion whatever, nor are they idolaters, but rather they are very meek and know no evil. They do not kill or capture others and are without weapons. They are so timid that a hundred of them flee from one of us, even if we are teasing. They are very trusting; they believe there is a God in Heaven, and they firmly believe that we come from Heaven. They learn very quickly any prayer we tell them to say, and they make the sign of the cross. Therefore Your Highnesses must resolve to make them Christians.

As the self-contradictions of this passage suggest, Columbus was under the spell of one current in European mythology that believed such "uncivilized" peoples to be somehow closer to the conditions of the Garden of Eden than those enmeshed in the conflicts of "civilization."

In fact, the Taínos themselves were enmeshed in the tribal raiding, slavery, and cannibalism that existed in the Caribbean long before any European arrived (the word "cannibal" is a corruption of the native term for the fierce Caribs who eventually gave their name to the whole region). Columbus was for a while on surprisingly good terms with his Taínos, who in turn used the Spaniards to their advantage against their enemies. But the distance between the cultures was great, and, with the arrival of less-than-ideal explorers in subsequent voyages, the situation took a bad turn. Towards the end of his third voyage, Columbus wrote to complain about criticism of his governorship over both natives and Spaniards:

> At home they judge me as a governor sent to Sicily or to a city or two under settled government and where the laws can be fully maintained, without fear of all being lost.... I ought to be judged as a captain who went from Spain to the Indies to conquer a people, warlike and numerous, and with customs and beliefs very different from ours.

Columbus had discovered that the Indians were real flesh-and-blood human beings, with the same mix of good and evil that everywhere constitutes the human condition.

Today, the usual way of characterizing the behavior of the Europeans at this early stage is to fault them for not having the kind of sensitivity to the Other that a modern anthropologist or ethnologist would bring to such situations. Overlooked in this condemnation is the fact that it was precisely out of these tumultuous conflicts that the West began to learn how to understand different cultures as objectively as possible in their own terms. Columbus himself astutely noted differences between the various subgroupings of Taínos as well as their distinctiveness from other tribes. And even when he was driven to harsh action—against both Indians and Spaniards—it was not out of mere desire for power. Bartolomé de las Casas, the well-known defender of the Indians, notes the "sweetness and benignity" of the admiral's character and, even while condemning what actually occurred, remarks, "Truly I would not dare blame the admiral's intentions, for I knew him well and I know his intentions were good." Las Casas attributes Columbus' shortcomings not to malign intent but to ignorance concerning how to handle an unprecedented situation.

This raises the question of larger intentions and the world impact of fifteenth-century European culture. The atrocities committed by Spain, England, Holland, and other European powers as they spread out over the globe in ensuing centuries are clear enough. No one today defends them. Less known, however, are the currents within that culture that have led to the very universal principles by which, in retrospect,

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we criticize that behavior today. For instance, not only Las Casas, but a weighty array of other religious thinkers began trying to specify what European moral obligations were to the new peoples.

Las Casas, who was the bishop of Chiapas, Mexico, where relations between mostly native populations and the central government remain dicey even today, bent over backwards to understand local practices. He once even described human sacrifices as reflecting an authentic piety and said that "even if cruel [they] were meticulous, delicate, and exquisite," a view that some of his critics have remarked exhibits a certain coldness towards the victims. Other missionaries learned native languages and recorded native beliefs. The information coming from the New World stimulated Francisco de la Vitoria, a Dominican theologian at the University of Salamanca in Spain, to develop principles of natural law that, in standard histories, are rightly given credit as the origin of modern international law. To read Vitoria on the Indies is to encounter an atmosphere closer to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights than to sinister Eurocentrism.

Las Casas and Vitoria influenced Pope Paul III to make a remarkable statement in his 1536 encyclical *Sublimis Deus*:

> Indians and all other people who may later be discovered by the Christians are by no means to be deprived of their liberty or the possession of their property, even though they be outside the faith of Jesus Christ. . . . Should the contrary happen it shall be null and of no effect. . . . By virtue of our apostolic authority we declare . . . that the said Indians and other peoples should be converted to the faith of Jesus Christ by preaching the word of God and by the example of good and holy living.

The Spanish crown itself had moral qualms about the conquest. Besides passing various laws trying to eliminate atrocities, it took a step unmatched before or since by any expanding empire: it called a halt to the process while theologians examined the question. In the middle of the sixteenth century, Charles V ordered a theological commission to debate the issue at the monastery of Valladolid. Las Casas defended the Indians. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, the greatest authority on Aristotle at the time, argued that Indians were slaves by nature and thus rightly subject to Spanish conquest. Though the commission never arrived at a clear vote and the Spanish settlers were soon back to their old ways, Las Casas' views were clearly superior and eventually prevailed.

Conquest aside, the question of even peaceful evangelizing remains very much with us. Today, most people, even Christians, believe it somehow improper to evangelize. The injunction to preach the gospel to all nations, so dear to Columbus' heart, seems an embarrassment, not least because of the ways the command has been misused. But some of the earlier missionaries tried a kind of inculturation that recognized what was good in the native practices and tried to build a symbolic bridge between them and the Christian faith. The Franciscans in New Spain and the Jesuits in Canada, for example, tried this approach. Not a few of them found martyrdom.

Many contemporary believers do not think that there was much need to evangelize. This usually arises out of the assumption that native religions are valid in their own way. It will not do, however, given the anthropological evidence, to make facile assumptions that all spiritual practices are on an equal plane. The early explorers who encountered them did not think so, and neither should we. For example, the Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes, no special friend of Christianity or the Spanish conquest, in the very act of admiring the richness of Aztec culture, characterizes the Aztec gods as "a whole pantheon of fear." Fuentes deplores the way that missionaries often collaborated with unjust appropriation of native land, but on a theological level notes the epochal shift in native cultures thanks to Christian influence: "One can only imagine the astonishment of the hundreds and thousands of Indians who asked for baptism as they came to realize that they were being asked to adore a god who sacrificed himself for men instead of asking men to sacrifice themselves to gods, as the Aztec religion demanded."

This Copernican Revolution in religious thought has changed religious practice around the world since it was first proclaimed in Palestine two millennia ago, yet is all but invisible to modern critics of evangelization. Any of us, transported to the Aztec capital Tenochtitlàn or to many other places around the world before the influence of Christianity and Europe, would react the way the conquistadors did —with rage and horror. We might not feel much different about some of the ways that Europeans, imitating Islamic practice, evangelized at times by the sword and perpetrated grave injustices around the world. But it is reductionist in the extreme to regard evangelization simply as imperialism. The usual uncritical way in which we are urged to respect the values of other cultures has only the merest grain of truth buried beneath what is otherwise religious indifferentism.

For all our sense of superiority to this now half-millennium-old story, we still face some of the same questions that emerged in the fifteenth century. We still have not found an adequate way to do justice to the claims of both universal principle and particular communities. We have what Václav Havel has called a "thin veneer of global civilization" mostly consisting of CNN, Coca Cola, blue jeans, rock

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music, and perhaps the beginning glimmer of something approaching a global agreement on how we should treat one another and the planet.

But that minimal unity conceals deeper conflicts involving not only resistance to superficiality but the survival of particular communities of meaning. We say, for example, that we have an equal respect for all cultures—until we come up against religious castes and sexism, clitorectomies and deliberate persecution. Then we believe that universal principles may take precedence. But whose universal principles? A Malaysian prime minister has lately instructed us that, contrary to international assumptions, "Western values are Western values: Asian values are universal values." It may take another five hundred years to decide whether that is so, or whether the opposition it assumes between East and West will persist.

All of this may seem a long way from the fifteenth century. But it is not mere historical fantasy to see in that beginning some of the global issues that are now inescapably on the agenda for the new millennium. Christianity and Islam, the two major proselytizing faiths in the world, are still seeking a modus vivendi. The global culture initiated by Columbus will always be inescapably European in origin and, probably, in basic shape. We chose long ago not to stay quietly at home and build the otherwise quite wonderful contraptions called cuckoo clocks. That decision brought (and brings) many challenges, but the very struggle should remind us of the glorious and ultimately providential destiny of the ongoing global journey that began in the fifteenth century. FT

At the Last Wedding

If wind were blue
rushing like water through treetops,
through knee-grasses,

If I could more than glimpse it
on a scattering of trees, a primary blueness
streaking from the southwest.

Now the sky descends like a stream pouring
through the clouds, raw and original blue
rushing down to sweep across the face of its brother.

Along white sea cliffs,
through temples ruined surging,
the verb of life flows up the peopled mount

To the altar, waiting.
Lift the veil.
See at last the crystal wind;

the kiss, as deed embraces intention;
reality and appearance spinning
arm in arm in arm.

I unpurse a laughing stream of blue,
cutting through the haze to an opening,
in through the rock, bursting blue again.

Eric Metaxas

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"Saving" the Poor

Daniel P. Moloney

The poor will always be with us. Yet, *pace* Cain, we have an obligation to look after our brothers. As we well know, poverty today is too often accompanied by social pathologies, deep corrupting vices, and a smoldering despair that Great Society welfare services do little to alleviate, and perhaps much to exacerbate. The welfare state provides money, food, shelter, education, medicine, even job training—the pathologies still remain. Even where a new breed of mayors and police chiefs seems to be getting crime under control, one gets the sense that in our poorest neighborhoods expensive policing is merely an external restraint on a culture that deep down respects the lawless and contemns the law. Reducing urban poverty involves changing that culture, and, most urgently, changing the hardened young men whose confidence and ill-gotten wealth make them objects of admiration and emulation. Changing the culture, then, means changing hearts as much as providing services, a task for which our welfare bureaucracies are, shall we say, poorly equipped.

Churches, though, are in the business of converting the hard of heart, and in our toughest neighborhoods they often are able to succeed where others have tried and failed. A growing number of church leaders, social scientists, policy analysts, and government officials want to find out why, and what can be done to make their efforts more effective. Many of them gathered at two recent conferences, one sponsored by the Center for Civic Innovation at New York's Manhattan Institute last November, and the other by the Civitas Program in Faith and Public Affairs in January in Washington.

Those deep inside this conversation speak in a combination of euphemism and political jargon: poor and crime-ridden urban neighborhoods, no matter where they are located, are called the "inner cities" (midtown Manhattan does not qualify). People who act out of religious motives are "the faith community," and their efforts to help others are "faith-based" programs. Where religious motivation is lacking or overtly religious language inappropriate, reference is made to "community programs" or "community outreach programs." The institutions and organizations behind such programs can be of three kinds: "government-run," "church-based," or, if religiously motivated but not officially tied to one church or congregation, "faith-based." Although nothing is ever "mosque-based" or "synagogue-based," mosques and synagogues are mentioned enough to indicate that this approach is not intended to be restricted to Christians. Occasionally an evangelical will slip and distinguish between "Roman Catholics" and "Christians," but most participants are ecumenically minded enough to purge their vocabulary of terms that might offend anyone on this politically, racially, and religiously charged issue. Although the lingo tends to make loving your neighbor sound like a military briefing, and can sometimes lead to sloppy generalizations (about which more later), I hope the reader will not mind the monotony if I take advantage of it as well.

The most important development for faith-based organizations (henceforth FBOs) is the passing of the Charitable Choice provision of the 1996 welfare reform act. Charitable choice requires state governments that receive federal block-grant welfare money to treat religious organizations just like any other private organization that receives such money, instead of discriminating against them simply because they involve religion. It used to be that if a church-run literacy program in Virginia taught people to read using the Bible, even if more of its graduates could read than those in less religious or nonreligious programs, the state of Virginia was not allowed to give the program any money. Under the new law, it probably would be illegal for Virginia *not*

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to fund the project. If the state wants to spend all the welfare money itself, it is allowed to do so. But if the state wants to contract out some of its services to nongovernment providers, it cannot prefer a nonreligious program over a religious program because of the latter's religious character.

What's more, there are very few strings attached to the money: The FBO can conduct its business as it likes so long as it provides services to those of all faiths and does not require its beneficiaries to participate actively in religious activities. The new law explicitly allows FBOs receiving government money to employ and hire only those with similar religious beliefs. The FBOs have found that this "discrimination" on the basis of religion has to be an option, or else taking government money would force them to become just another religiously neutral service provider, and would undermine the reason for their successes.

Dr. Stephen Monsma of Pepperdine University sees charitable choice as embodying a "substantive neutrality" theory of church-state relations, as opposed to the unworkable "no-aid" theory of *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947) and the heavily criticized "formal neutrality" theory of *Employment Division v. Smith* (1990). The older theory holds that the "wall of separation" between church and state forbids the government from funding any organization that is religious in character. Since it was obvious in the 1940s that religion was everywhere, the Supreme Court made a further distinction. Whenever the sacred and secular elements of an organization could be separated (e.g., a soup kitchen), the government could fund the secular part but not the religious part. But if the organization was "pervasively sectarian," the government could not give it money without an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

Policing of FBO religious practices by the government is erratic. In his research Monsma found that FBOs receiving government aid variously display religious pictures, have a paid chaplain on staff, pray before meals, and encourage their clients to pray or make a specific religious commitment—all of which, the courts have ruled, officially qualify a program as "pervasively" religious. Monsma ranked the organizations on the basis of how many of these practices took place in their government-funded programs. He found that 28 percent of the most pervasively religious charities received most or all of their money from the government, while some others with a minimal religious atmosphere were told by government officials to change their practices. Judges and bureaucrats tend to look the other way with some FBOs, sometimes because they are too effective to close down, sometimes because the judge or bureaucrat favors the religious commitments of the program. Monsma concluded that the whole legal framework is applied arbitrarily and inconsistently, with more than a little religious prejudice thrown in—the most "pervasively sectarian" programs are almost invariably those from the most otherworldly traditions, usually run by zealous evangelical Protestants or by Catholics. In part for these reasons, the Supreme Court has over time modified its approach to church-state relations.

But not before making a disastrous false start. Writing for the Court in *Smith*, Justice Antonin Scalia ruled that an Oregon law prohibiting state employees from using illegal drugs also applied to American Indians who use the drug peyote in religious rituals. He reasoned that a law neutral towards religion (the Oregon law was obviously not a sneaky way of outlawing Indian religious practices) could not infringe the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion. Any law impeding religious practice would be constitutional as long as it did the impeding accidentally, as it were. As readers of this journal are well aware, the "formal neutrality" approach created an enormous backlash. Part of the backlash evolved into the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which was supposed to restore the right of religious freedom to its pre-*Smith* status. President Clinton signed it into law in 1993 only to have the Supreme Court strike it down in 1997.

The "substantive neutrality" idea behind charitable choice, on the other hand, holds that government policies may neither favor *nor disfavor* religion; they may make it neither easier *nor harder* to carry out one's religious practices. (This theory seems to reflect Supreme Court jurisprudence since *Smith*, according to both Monsma and Carl Esbeck, the law professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia who drafted the charitable choice provision for Missouri's Republican Senator John Ashcroft.)

In formal neutrality, the government may infringe on religious freedom as long as it does not formally set out to do so; this has had the effect of promoting secularism in the public sphere while relegating all religion to the private sphere. Substantive neutrality not only is neutral among all religions, it also does not subordinate religion to secularism. It allows the government to develop a "partnership" with religious citizens and religiously based mediating institutions so long as it evaluates them on the basis of their nonreligious virtues. The state cannot favor the organization that leads the most citizens to their salvation, but it can favor the one that turns the most hoodlums into good citizens, even if it does so by trying to save them.

Now that charitable choice is the law, one might expect faith-based charities to be lining up for government contracts. Yet very few have. Stanley Carlson-Thies of the Center for Public Justice believes that both FBOs and state bureaucrats harbor a half century of bad feelings that need to be overcome. Some states don't seem to believe that they can now

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contract out with religious organizations. Others try to make FBOs adopt nondiscriminatory employment policies, although the law now permits them to hire and fire on religious grounds. Several states have provisions in their state constitutions that prohibit any government funds from going to religious organizations; others exclude them more subtly through contracting procedures and administrative requirements that smaller organizations find complicated and expensive.

For all the obstacles state governments still put in the way of charitable choice, Carlson-Thies claims some of the biggest problems come from the FBOs themselves. The more conservative Protestant congregations, for example, especially those in the South, are suspicious of nearly all entanglement with the government, fearing that strings inevitably are attached to the money. Religious organizations on the left often object to the entire welfare reform effort, seeing it as the first step towards dismantling government welfare. Some of the smaller FBOs believe that a shoestring budget is part of the key to their success, and so don't want more money. Moreover, certain groups are so singular or rely so heavily on the inspiration of a few people that they see no way they can grow bigger or deal with more people. And some aggressively proselytizing FBOs are barred from charitable choice funds because they do not distinguish in any way their service programs from their ministries, requiring their clients to participate in their religious activities.

Most of the poorer churches and FBOs, though, *do* want government money—a fact confirmed in sociological research done by Mark Chaves of the University of Arizona. Chaves found that about a third of all the churches and congregations in America would take government money if they could get it, especially predominantly black churches, poor churches, liberal churches, and large churches (more than nine hundred members). (Many conference participants noted the ironies: conservative politicians want to give money to support religiously based institutions, while only liberal churches seem to want the money.) An Ashcroft aide said the Senator was disappointed that more FBOs had not taken advantage of charitable choice, but he was confident that this would change as they understood what an opportunity this law was for them. Ashcroft reportedly is working on another charitable choice bill that applies not just to welfare but to all government contracts concerning housing, juvenile crime prevention, substance abuse and treatment programs, abstinence education, senior services, and child welfare services. (Sen. Ashcroft can be reached at 202-224-3246, johnashcroft@ashcroft.senate.gov.)

While the passing of charitable choice is the most important development for the FBOs, equally notable is the boom in scholarly research on their activities and the increased attention paid them by the media. Although elite schools of social work still don't pay attention to religion, more and more sociologists do, and they are trying to explain why FBOs succeed where government approaches fail. Although these discussions sometimes devolved into mere cheerleading for God, the conferences, especially the one at the Manhattan Institute, reflect an emerging consensus as to what makes a program successful amidst the toughest urban conditions.

Panelists at both conferences agreed that the most successful programs, whether the government's or not, are run by people living near those they help. The Reverend Eugene Rivers, whose TenPoint Leadership Program is a highly successful ministry to violent and high-risk youth in Boston, believes "round the clock accessibility is essential" for a program to work. The service provider must "live around the corner, know his neighborhood, and speak the language." Dr. Luis Lugo, Director of the Religion Program at the Pew Charitable Trusts, cited research showing that successful nongovernment programs are staffed by people who live in the same zip code as their clients.

Dr. Harold Dean Trulear from Public/Private Ventures agreed that proximity to the neighborhood is key, and this worried him. Now that many successful blacks are fleeing to the suburbs (with their churches not far behind), he fears that even the church- and faith-based outreach to inner-city youth will come from the suburbs, which will diminish their effectiveness. "The outreach used to be to 'us,' but once people move, the outreach is to 'them,' and the nature of the outreach changes." Trulear observed that when the leaders who make an urban neighborhood work commute from outside, they go home at night and the leadership of the neighborhood leaves with them. If the homegrown leaders never develop, the FBOs "disempower" the people just as surely as government programs do. He suggested that suburbanites in high-powered jobs shouldn't be running midnight basketball; it would be better for an ex-gang member to run the program and for the suburbanites to use their education and their resources, both spiritual and financial, to help.

When these programs do work, it is often because they encourage people to change their lives. Tom Lewis, a retired police officer who founded the Fishing School to nurture at-risk children in Washington D.C., emphasized what some have called the "transformative" nature of FBOs. His program gets its name from the adage that if you teach a man to fish, you have helped him forever. Thus, rather than just providing handouts, Lewis also helps the people who come to him evaluate their entire lives, encouraging them to determine where their life is going and motivating them to change. Dr. Floyd Flake, a former Congressman who is pastor of one of the largest

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black congregations in New York City, told the Manhattan Institute crowd that the secret to turning around the inner city is to get people "to look at themselves and the capacity that is within them." Gary Walker, president of Public/Private Ventures, claimed that the secret to FBOs was that, unlike other social intervention programs, they have no qualms about trying to "develop better people."

Dr. Amy Sherman, a sociologist who directs an urban ministry in Charlottesville, Virginia, also sees the transformative nature of FBOs as an important reason for their success. Instead of trying merely to rehabilitate a drug user, say, which might clean him up but leaves him with the emptiness that led him to drugs in the first place, FBOs try to turn him into a new man. Because of their religious beliefs, FBOs promote a more accurate understanding of human behavior. They tell those they help, "You are made in the image of God, and you have the dignity that comes with that; but you are also imperfect, subject to original sin, and are thus not the best judge of your actions." Someone who buys this picture is more likely to look to God for a direction to his life and for an idea of how to behave morally, and less likely to remain aimless or to drift through life.

What's more, since those staffing the FBO usually accept this picture and try to live morally themselves, they do not condescend to their clients. When the drug user and the person running the drug treatment program both agree that they share a struggle against their sinful inclinations, they can work together and make demands on each other, ending the one-sided relationships of the service provider paradigm. Sherman pointed out that the best programs insist that everybody must care for everybody else, requiring that all persons take responsibility for the actions of others as well as for themselves. This heavier demand operates as a "dignity enhancer"—when the most downtrodden are told they need to be leaders and that they have something to offer others, they stand a little taller and began to think they just might really be made in the image of God. They stop thinking solipsistically and begin to develop the outlook and virtues that make one a good citizen.

For all the wonkish jargon and occasional religious dissonance, the optimism and common sense, the faith and hope of the participants in the conferences left a strong impression. The theologian in me, though, had some doubts about the emphasis on generic "religion" or "faith." When the government gives money to FBOs, it treats them as sort of a black box: government dollars and high-risk kids go in, and (often enough) moderately good citizens come out. As long as the FBOs meet certain minimal standards, the government will evaluate them simply in terms of their successes and failures. Many of the people involved in these conferences, however, seemed to believe that when a FBO is successful it is the religious element that does the trick—the subtext being that their successes are the result of supernatural assistance or evidence of God's greater activity in their church. This can lead to some tricky theological problems: If the church across the street has a more successful outreach to gang members, do I convert? How do these (mostly) Christian advocates explain the successes of programs motivated by faiths incompatible with their own, such as those of the Nation of Islam? Or the greater successes of Nation of Islam programs than those run by liberal Episcopalians? Yes, God plays a role in people turning people's lives around, as He plays a role in all things. But if 90 percent of Americans pray, as many at these conferences declared, aren't there probably some government social workers who pray for their clients?

If so, and unless God out of deference to the ACLU ignores the prayers of state employees, the successes of FBOs are probably due in large part to something on the human side. The philosopher in me would bet that those who practice traditional religions have on average a better understanding of human nature than the nonreligious or the New Agers or those who practice an attenuated nontraditional form of Christianity or Judaism.

The jargon of FBOs seems to use "faith-based" as a sort of marker for programs that have the characteristics sketched above: an emphasis on transformation rather than rehabilitation; an attempt to raise expectations; the promotion of the dignity of the imago Dei over shallow self-esteem; the acknowledgment of one's imperfections and need for help in overcoming them; the presence of grown-ups who care about the people they help. These sound like the sort of things any good football coach can inspire. They also are, with the relevant modifications, characteristics of Black Nationalism, feminist consciousness-raising, and, for all I know, the Aryan Nation.

Although this is hotly debated, my bet is that programs grounded in contradictory faiths can have similar results (humanly speaking) because those faiths share a more or less correct understanding of human nature and what one needs to flourish humanly, despite their differences over how human beings flourish supernaturally. This result would be predicted by traditional Christian anthropology, what some traditions call natural law and others call common grace. On this view, religion might be the best way to persuade people of the truth about human nature; convincing a drug addict or juvenile delinquent that Jesus loves him is likely to be more successful than teaching him Aristotle or Kant.

It is important to mention these caveats because of a dangerous tendency of sociologists to talk about religion in purely instrumental terms, i.e., as a means to the end of creating good citizens. The government black box approach to FBOs makes sense—religion does seem to be a way to save the inner cities and

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make bad citizens into good ones. But religious groups have to be careful not to let the desire for government approval affect their own thinking about what they are doing. Otherwise they reduce the supernatural to the natural, and they encourage policy elites to believe that traditional religion is only for the down-and-out.

Despite such dangers and possible misunderstandings, however, FBOs are here to stay, and these conferences help to show why. Each gathered innovative traditionalists and upbeat moral realists "reaching out" to "empower people" and "renew the civil society" of the "inner cities" through "church-based" and "community-based" "public/private partnerships" and "initiatives." It is enough to restore one's faith in the vibrancy of the American experiment, if not in the future of the English language.

Metaphysical Alphabet

A is for alphabet, scrolling
behind closed lids:
B is for Beatrice, that stern
theological marm
C is for Caliban, our child crouching
on the couch
D is for dust, the nought
to which all comes

E is for ever, the eternal
dreaming us
F is for fascination, when
the mirror shatters
G is for god, of stuff or light,
or both, or none
H is for history, all its bloody
baths and golden clutter

I is for ego, its babels
and communions
J is for jabber, the mind's
undoing
K is for *kyrie*, to whom
or what we bow
L is for lunacy;
see below:

M is for moon, whose
substation are we
N is for nothing: *ex nihilo*
all came
O is for Orpheus, his singing head
bobbing down the stream
P is for Prospero, who drowned
his book and broke his staff

Q is for qualm, verging
on conscience
R is for *res*, the thing
itself
S is for *sophia*, our long-
lost cousin
T is for time,
never enough

U is for under
the green sward
V is for votive,
deep vow's fulfillment
W is for wonder, awe
or quest rousing
X is for chromosome, the twinned
one of my sex
Y is for yours,
mating with mine
Z is

Mary Freeman

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Nature as Law and Gift

Edward T. Oakes

NATURAL LAW IN JUDAISM. By DAVID NOVAK. *Cambridge University Press. 210 pp. $54.95.*

I

At first glance, no marriage in the history of ideas would seem more unlikely to succeed as an artificial union of opposites ("arranged," as it were, by Yenta the village matchmaker) than that between Jewish ethics and natural law. For one thing, in a Jewish context "ethics" covers a much wider swath of human behavior than what most people think of when they use ethical categories. At least among those untutored in the rarefied mountain air of metaethical theory, ethics usually denotes that range of human behavior that can be subsumed under the rubric of judgments about *inherent* good and evil. But no observant Jew, either in antiquity or modern times, has ever claimed that eating pork is an evil in and of itself or that resting on the Sabbath is so inherently good that it is enjoined on the whole human race.

Quite the contrary, large areas of Jewish law pertain to what the Torah holds up to Jews as God's (at least seemingly) arbitrary ordinances for his people. There is no immediately discernable *reason* for the circumcision of male infants, or for the prohibition of mixing milk and meat, except the Torah's claim that God has so ordained. Yet natural law theory holds that the judgments of good and evil are not (or at least should not be) arbitrary judgments based on convenience or political utility, but are in fact located in the very nature of the behaviors (or behav*ers*) themselves. While very few Jews, I imagine, would hold that the Decalogue's prohibition against murder is an arbitrary decree which God might have ordained otherwise, nonetheless the admission of an inherent good or evil in the very *nature* of certain actions can be deeply problematic for Jewish theology. This ambivalence arises not just because the concept of natural law came from the pagan Stoics, but because the invocation of natural law seems both to trump revelation and to limit God's freedom.

This dilemma is what David Novak, in his most recent tour de force of Jewish theology, *Natural Law in Judaism*, calls Judaism's "Euthyphro problem," after Plato's dialogue featuring Socrates and the Athenian seer and mantic Euthyphro. In this early dialogue (perhaps Plato's first), Socrates bluntly tells his eponymous interlocutor, a self-styled religious expert, that he, Socrates, cannot believe in the Greek myths because the gods behave so immorally. "Do you think that is why I am on trial [for atheism], because I cannot believe such tall tales as these?" he says at one point (thinking specifically of Zeus' castration and murder of his father, the titan Cronos). And with that rhetorical question was born Western philosophy of religion, the first recorded instance of a pagan calling into question his religion based on a higher appeal to abstract norms of right and wrong.

Now Judaism's "Euthyphro problem" is even more severe than anything Athenian religion endured under Socrates' midwifery. One need only compare Socrates here with Abraham, universally regarded as the father of monotheism. What one notices immediately, especially when God orders Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, is that Abraham did *not* invoke a higher ethic against the deity. As Søren Kierkegaard noted in perhaps his most influential book, *Fear and Trembling*, if the story of Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son means anything it must signify that God transcends the categories (or at least our categories) of good and evil and that to follow the way of the Lord will eventually, at least for some select chosen ones, mean to renounce those norms.

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Admittedly, Abraham does later interrogate God on behalf of the iniquitous city of Sodom, even daring to tell the Most High that his plan to obliterate the city (Genesis 18:25) would violate God's own justice: "Can the judge of the whole earth not himself do justice?" Most fascinatingly, this almost Socratic rejoinder became for later writers the beginnings of natural rights theory. Hugo Grotius, the seventeenth-century Dutch Protestant who is generally taken to be the first modern writer to transpose the Stoic doctrine of natural law into the more modern key of natural rights, explains the passage as asserting that justice itself stands over God; and—in a fateful move—Grotius also goes on to say that natural rights would hold "even if we were to have the effrontery to say there is no God." But as Novak rightly points out, "after this concession (and despite Grotius' disclaimer of any atheism on his part), it is not too difficult to understand how Kant saw theology as having validity only when it is made to serve the ultimate ends of ethics."

For Novak, however, nothing could be more disastrous for Judaism than to admit Socrates, Plato, the Stoics, Grotius, and Kant into the operative logic of Jewish jurisprudence, for not only did the ancient advocates of natural law such as Plato and the Stoics lack a doctrine of creation, but even Grotius and Kant—devout monotheists though they were—imported a false philosophy into God's sovereign dealings with the human race:

> The teaching of Scripture (and the Rabbis thereafter) is quite clearly not what Grotius and others made it out to be, even in the dialogue between God and Abraham. God creates everything, even justice itself, and nothing in the world can stand over God as judge. . . . Pascal was right at this point: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not the God of the philosophers, certainly not the God of Plato and all whom he influenced.

Novak also sees the admission of natural law concepts as the first step in Judaism's long effort to make peace with modernity by abandoning the inner essence of its identity, a Faustian bargain culminating in the Holocaust. ("The Holocaust and what is perceived as the continuing political isolation and vulnerability of the State of Israel are supposed to have taught us," he says early in the book, "that the Jews have been asked to give far more than they have received from Western Civilization. And this has been used to argue, retroactively, that the Enlightenment itself, at least as regards the interests of Jews, and maybe in and of itself, has been a failure.") But Faustian bargains aside, there is also the formal issue: to see Jewish ethics as itself one particular expression of behavior that is inherently good or evil forces Jewish law to justify itself before a bar that will compel Judaism to betray its origins in God's will. To be sure, each step of the way toward the secularization of Judaism seemed plausible and reasonable at the time:

> [At the dawn of modernity] it was assumed that Jewish ethics was only designed for the self-interest of the Jews, usually at the expense of whatever gentiles they might encounter in the world. So, if Jews could not make the opposite case for themselves and their ethical tradition, there was no reason to assume that Judaism itself could function outside the ghetto in a sphere of secular equality. Thus the identification of Judaism itself with a universalistic ethics must be seen as part of the effort, which began with Moses Mendelssohn in Germany in the middle of the eighteenth century, to argue that Judaism was not hopelessly parochial. Since Judaism can be shown to affirm universal truths and norms, Jews could become citizens of the new secularly constituted nation-states without having to leave their historical religion altogether, as was the case with Spinoza, a case that continued to haunt much of Jewish thought.

Astute observers of the Christian pathos will recognize a similar strategy at work in the writings of the English Deists Matthew Tindal and John Locke, and in the German Pietists Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schleiermacher. If Christianity wants to avoid the charge of outright obscurantism or willful fanaticism, all four claimed, it must justify itself before the bar of nature; and if revelation has any meaning whatever, besides being otherwise an expression of ethnic or religious chauvinism, it must be seen as being merely a pedagogical repetition for the peasant mind-set of the Book of Nature. (The title of Tindal's 1730 book, *Christianity as Old as Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, says it all, as in fact does Kant's *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* and Schleiermacher's *Speeches on Religion Addressed to its Cultured Despisers.*) In fact, at one point Novak helps Christians see the similarity:

> Philosophically, after the Enlightenment, Judaism as a minority religion had the same problem as did Christianity, the majority religion. Religion, any religion, had to convince secular culture of its social worth. For because of Kant's dominant influence, ethics was considered to be the highest level of human knowledge. It had successfully replaced both revealed theology and metaphysics as the throne before which all cultural institutions had to justify their very existence.

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But there are important differences as well. Christianity in the industrial and developed nations is deeply divided across its whole spectrum on the issue of making peace with modernity, with fundamentalists hovering on the rejectionist side and liberal Protestants racing to embrace the Enlightenment and all its works. Judaism shows the same divisions, with Orthodox Jews huddled in self-created ghettos and rejecting much (though not all) of the modern world, while Reform and secular Jews follow the same tack as liberal Protestantism, embracing secularity. What is unique about the case of Judaism, however, is the strange task that seems to have devolved on secular Jews by which they have assumed the role—to Novak's undisguised dismay—of being, so to speak, the gatekeepers and marshals of secular ideology, perpetually taking it upon themselves to police the boundaries between church and state.

The strange, almost religious, adherence to the norms of secularity by so many Jews and their lobbying organs has many roots that are not always easy to sort out. Indeed the failure to recognize this complexity is one source for the old and vaguely anti-Semitic canard about untoward "Jewish influence" within the media and law courts. But as Novak points out, at least one reason for this quasi-religious subscription to the norms of modernity is precisely the sense that, in contrast to Christianity, Judaism—as primarily a behavioral rather than a doctrinal religion—is ideally suited to worship at the Kantian altar. Judaism's behavioral bias makes it suited to join the forces of secular moralism; and perhaps it is the Hebrew rather than the Hellenic strain in Western culture that most accounts for the moralistic tone of so much contemporary debate. (Despite what some would say, it surely cannot be entirely accidental that Karl Marx was born in a Jewish household.)

Perhaps the three most influential philosophers of Judaism in the twentieth century are the neo-Kantian Hermann Cohen, the existentialist Martin Buber, and the recent hero of postmodern thought Emmanuel Levinas, whose influence as Jews on secular thought is rivalled only by that of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Noam Chomsky. But the latter two have concerns that far transcend their religious background, for whom that background seems more or less accidental to their philosophical positions, while the former three argue directly out of their Judaism, precisely the outlook that makes their thought so instructive for Novak's thesis:

> One could argue that for all of them [Cohen, Buber, and Levinas] God's only function is to provide some sort of undergirding for ethics, and that is their view of God's function in Judaism as well. And for all of them, both the singularity of revelation and the singularity of the Jewish people as the community elected to receive that revelation in the covenant sooner or later become subsumed into universal nature.

Now it is central to the whole point of David Novak's argument that this entire strategy is founded on a most fundamental error, whose formulation we must cite in full, adding italics to highlight its centrality: *"Theologically, the error here is that revelation is essentially reduced to the supreme awareness of an order already present in creation."* And as we have seen, nothing could be more antithetical to the core of Judaism itself than to interpret revelation as a reduplication of nature, in spite of what a cloud of Jewish witnesses, from Spinoza to Levinas, might say. In fact, to assert the opposite would itself be the worst form of ethnic chauvinism: the Bible makes it perfectly clear that there is nothing inherent in the Jews as a people or race by which they might have "merited" the election of God. Nor can circumcision be regarded as natural or the eating of pork unnatural, despite what so many anthropologists from Ernest Renan to Mary Douglas have tried to establish. God's election is either an act of divine will (which inside history is bound to seem arbitrary) or it must be regarded as the height of ethnic presumption. Judaism is either a fashioning by God or it is no religion at all.

II

In light of all the above, the reader will no doubt feel pardoned for getting the impression that *Natural Law in Judaism* is one long philippic against the advisability of introducing the concept of natural law into Jewish theology. In fact, the reader will perhaps be surprised to learn, David Novak's book is not only a most effective and learned defense of the use of natural law in Judaism, it is also one of the most brilliant expositions of natural law theory I know, fully worthy to join ranks with works on natural law by Yves Simon, Russell Hittinger, and John Finnis.

But how can such a thesis be reconciled with the reservations cited by Novak, the totality of which seem to preclude any marriage, arranged or otherwise, between Jewish ethics and natural law? (I should note that, while I agree with the author's analysis outlined above, the objections to natural law given there are Novak's real convictions and not a rhetorical straw man.) So sharply contrasting are his views on natural law that it almost seems as if Novak were adopting Thomas Aquinas' method, that is, beginning his book with the concession: "It would seem that the concept of natural law cannot function inside Jewish theology or jurisprudence."

As it happens, Novak's reservations about natural law are not cordoned off in the opening chapter but are scattered throughout the book (as is his defense of natural law), though at one point he does bring the reader up short in true Thomistic manner ("On the contrary, I reply") when he quotes the Talmud to val-

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idate natural law: "The Torah is no longer in heaven." This rather enigmatic dictum could perhaps be interpreted in a number of ways, but we have the authority of the great medieval Jewish theologian Moses Maimonides to see the statement as a justification for natural law. In his *Guide for the Perplexed* Maimonides glosses this line from the Talmud with the remark: "Therefore I say that the Law, although it is not natural, enters into what is natural." Or as one early rabbinic source puts it even more bluntly: "There are matters written in the Torah which even if they had not been written there, reason would have required that they be written."

Yet the question still hovers over the proceedings like Poe's raven: If such concepts as natural law and natural rights are so dangerous for Judaism, why are they also so indispensable? The solution, for Novak, is actually quite simple. It begins with the realization that the dilemma of modern Judaism stems from the way it keeps presenting itself with a false alternative. Now formulating issues as false alternatives is the mark of a mediocre mind. David Novak's creativity as a theologian, on the contrary, derives from his ability to rephrase alternatives in fresh ways. As noted earlier, the received wisdom that thinks in terms of either natural law *or* devotion to Torah practice summarizes the entire modern Jewish pathos.

This dichotomy, however, is a false one. For the modern problem really lies in the fact that so many Enlightenment thinkers relied on a concept of "natural" that was anything but a reflection of human nature as it actually exists. In other words, too much of natural law theory, especially that derived from those thinkers from Grotius on who transposed natural law into natural rights (which after the French Revolution usually became known as "human rights"), relies on *a concept of nature that is not natural.* Vast swaths of political theory stemming from the Enlightenment speak of human beings as pre-social monads whose sociality stems from a subsequent decision to join a group from a prior isolation. "Unlike what pertained in the older premodern societies," the author says, "the individual human [in modernity] did not come *from* society; rather he (and later she) came *to* it."

This notion, as everyone knows, is called the theory of "the social contract." Unfortunately for its advocates and despite its vast influence, it is a total fiction, a complete distortion of the nature of the social life of humans. The absence of any historically authentic social contract in the life of primitive man makes all political theories founded on this airy cloud equally fictional. Most people today categorize political divisions into the binary categories of liberal and conservative (another one of those jejune, digital pigeonholes that function more to preclude thought than to promote it). A much more central dichotomy in modern politics, however, is rooted in those who accept the fiction of a social contract and those who see it for the fiction that it is.

The former view, one that accepts the social contract theory, leads to a hyper-individualism that, on the liberal side, fetishizes free speech and subscribes to a "do your own thing" morality, and, on the conservative side, is reflected in libertarian economics, as in Margaret Thatcher's famous (or notorious?) statement, "There is no such thing as society." The position that recognizes the social contract as a fiction, however, sees community as the locus for individual meaning. It too has more or less liberal and conservative expressions, with the former leaning toward communitarianism (a kind of unlikely hybrid of socialism and capitalism that Alasdair MacIntyre once rather dryly called "going to bed with the phone company") and the latter stressing traditional morality and trying to resist the rationalizing trends of modern society.

In any event, here is where an authentic theory of natural law proves to be indispensable for Judaism, *but only when the social contract theory is abandoned,* a task that "requires radical criticism of the key political idea of the Enlightenment, . . . that human beings can construct their own primary society autonomously. It is an idea running from Locke to Kant to Rawls to Habermas, but one having philosophical opposition running from Burke to Hegel to Gadamer to MacIntyre—mutatis mutandis."

Once it is recognized that the notion of a social contract is a fiction and that human sociality is an essential component of human nature, it then becomes immediately clear that community takes priority, not over the individual as such (Baroness Thatcher's worry), but over society. Novak is alluding here to the famous German distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society). *Gesellschaft* is also the German term for a corporation owned by stockholders, which highlights the specifically contractual reality of society.

But all contractual relationships are first founded on a prior community of kinship relations, which themselves are founded on ineluctable biological realities of mammalian life: mother/child, begetter/conceiver, infant/adult, and so forth. Human sociality is *entirely* an outgrowth and expression of these unavoidable relationships, which are no more "agreed upon" by some hypothetical caucus of Australopithecenes than is human existence itself. No one chooses to be born, or to be born male or female, etc., nor does anyone in primitive communities choose the role of hunter, gatherer, and so on. Even later social identities of status—king, shaman, crone, warrior, matriarch, seer—are grounded in these more fundamental mammalian relations and not in some fictitious contract or verbal agreement. In other words, using Novak's terminology, the individual al-

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ways comes *from* society (in the wider sense), not *to* it.

And the same may be said of culture: we are much more its products than its fashioners (though of course we are both). In most democratic theory (John Dewey's, for example) "culture" is a concept that usually links rationalized "society" and autochthonous "community," which is true enough. But under the absurdities of social contract theory, culture must develop from being a matter of historical *custom* into a form of behavior that is more *rational* and organized. But as Novak rightly points out, the word "culture" comes from the word "cult," meaning devotion to a god. And this intentionality embedded in cult/culture alters the very terms of the debate:

> "Cult" is not regarded by its adherents as something "quaint" or particular at all; they regard it as the *axis mundi*, the very connection between God and the world, and that which gives humans their true place in the cosmos. To call them "folk cultures" . . . is to avoid any phenomenological integrity at all. Indeed, such communities, which are inevitably religiously constituted, operate at a deeper level of human existence than any society possibly could. For they deal with the most profound of all human questions: What is my true place in the universal order of things? . . . A society like a modern democracy can at best only deal with the question: What is my proper role in an association based on the rights of various, disparate wills?

Just as society is founded on a prior community, so too the procedural questions of a secular state are secondary issues founded on a more transcendent culture. The "cultus," the devotion to God, must be open to nature because nature is God's creation. This is why Novak can say that "in the deepest sense, there is no 'secular culture.'"

Contemporary society makes plain enough the price we must pay for repressing these cosmic questions. This repression is doubtless the single most important factor behind the vast range of pathologies now so endemic to modern life, including the political pathologies of the twentieth century such as communism and fascism, which, as Novak well notes, rush in to fill the vacuum.

When a religious believer refuses to repress these questions or even uses his faith to answer these questions in the public square, he soon meets with secular ideology's intolerance toward even the formulation of these questions. Richard Rorty once notoriously called the invocation of God's will a "conversation stopper," expressing the now-standard view that citizens who are believers must first assume a public identity as rational, ahistorical persons before venturing to participate in public debate, reserving their private identity as believers for more domestic spheres, as if religion were a hobby such as fly-fishing or building model trains. But that, as Novak points out, relies upon "the erroneous notion that democracy must create its own culture rather than drawing upon the practical wisdom of more primary cultures, cultures like Judaism that inevitably trace their wisdom back to the God who has created all and who has revealed himself to its adherents. . . . The issue is whether one is required to be a *secularist* in order to be a participant in secular *space*."

Here is the point where natural law establishes its central place in mediating between society and community, between political jockeying in the secular space and religious commitments in the domestic sphere, between debate in the public square and prayer around the family hearth. For as the author notes early on, "natural law . . . is less exalted than direct divine revelation and more exalted than merely local human arrangements."

Even more crucial, natural law also provides the only possible long-term grounding for human rights. At one point Novak speaks of natural law theory "replacing" the idea of human rights. I myself would prefer to speak of natural law *grounding* human rights (this is perhaps the only misstep in the book); but in any event his wider point is no doubt correct that only a theory of natural law can rescue the campaign for human rights from being anything more than disguised power politics or cultural imperialism.

> The idea of human rights has usually assumed that these rights can simply be posited without the enunciation of any ontology underlying them, that they create themselves as it were. . . . But unlike the idea of human rights, [the concept of natural law] does not claim to be self-constituting. By its real assertion of *nature*, it indicates that it is rooted in an order that transcends any immanent society. Here is where it parts company with liberalism and reconnects itself to the religions of revelation whence it emerged, in our case, to Judaism.

III

Christians enamored of the theology of Karl Barth are apt to think that theologians who venture to admit a concept of nature into their thought are thereby abandoning the gospel; at one point in his career Barth even made bold to dub natural theology *the* invention of the Antichrist, a piece of theological silliness he never did manage entirely to live down. But what Novak has made clear in his book, as in the quotation above, is how the concept of nature gains its truest legitimacy from the Bible itself, specifically in its theology of creation. Far from being a pagan import whose introduction into the theology of revelation is bound to trump God and limit his freedom,

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natural law belongs in Jewish (and, *pari passu*, in Christian) theology precisely because Scripture itself affirms its legitimacy. Natural law has its place in revelation not just for the obvious, almost tautological reason that "humans bring an intelligence to revelation before they receive governance from revelation." Nor does natural law have a place in the Bible just because Cain knew that the murder of his brother Abel made him guilty eons before the Decalogue's command "thou shalt not kill." Natural law for Novak forms an essential part of all Jewish theology and jurisprudence because, above all, nature is God's gift—is, in other words, a product of God's will.

It may seem that Novak is now skirting the discredited Deist view that revelation is merely a republication of the Book of Nature, that Scripture merely reminds us of what nature already testifies. Not at all. In a fascinating parallel with Thomas Aquinas' view of the matter, Novak shows that the covenant does not abolish nature but builds on it: Where natural justice was the most that other nations in the ancient Near East could imagine, justice was for Israel the bare minimum the covenant guaranteed.

The covenant's dependence on nature even holds for that feature of God's pact with the Jews that would seem to connect most closely with social contract theories: the element of mutual agreement. Like the words "pact" and "treaty," "covenant" and "contract" imply a mutuality of will that would seem to undermine Novak's previous contrast between ineluctable community and agreed-upon society (perhaps this is another reason for the quasi-religious adherence of so many secular Jews to the "naked public square"). But as the author explains, God encounters his people *as* a people, and only on that (natural) basis does the Torah make sense.

> God's covenant is not primarily made with individual persons but with a people, a people that is already constituted as a community. That is quite different from an association of like-minded individuals who come together after each is convinced of a political idea. The covenant is such an association too, even in biblical times, but that association presupposes an earlier form of community that is improved but not replaced by it.

This insight explains why Novak can say in his concluding chapter that "natural law is the practical thrust of the doctrine of creation," indeed is the very presupposition of the covenant. Moreover, in his lapidary formulation, natural law is also "that which makes Jewish moral discourse possible in an intercultural world." Interest in natural law throughout Jewish history, he notes, can be directly correlated to the worldly involvement of Jews at any one juncture of history. Natural law is the bridge, so to speak, for Jews who want to leave the ghetto without becoming so assimilated that they abandon their religion: "What a natural law perspective does for Jews at this level is to enable them to make rights claims, but without having to adopt the type of all-embracing secularism that is antithetical to the covenantal basis of traditional Jewish life and thought."

One cannot help but think once more of Karl Barth. Despite his towering genius and momentary influence, Barth's influence on Protestant churches is now almost entirely vestigial, even in Switzerland. No doubt it would be tempting for Barthians to attribute this lack of influence to the decadence of contemporary mainline Protestantism, and they could certainly cite the recent romance of many seminary professors with multiculturalism and postmodern thought as evidence for their suspicion. However plausible such a defense might seem, I cannot help but feel that Barth is himself, at least partially and perhaps largely, to blame, for his rejection of natural theology automatically guarantees the later ghettoization of his influence. But even more damaging to Barth's position is the fact that the foundation for natural law is not just philosophical but—for believers at any rate—scriptural. (One does not defend Scripture by undermining the doctrine of nature established *in* Scripture.)

IV

I finished this book with only one lingering question: Why, having alerted his readers so effectively to the dangers of natural law in Jewish theology and having shown, nonetheless, its absolute indispensability, did the author not then go back, in true Thomist fashion, and answer his prior objections by assuring the reader that natural law is still not dangerous? In other words, perhaps the concept of natural law is both indispensable and yet no less fatal for that. I am thinking in this context of a remark by a character in one of Isaac Bashevis Singer's short stories ("A Young Man in Search of Love") who says: "A voice from heaven should be ignored if it is not on the side of justice."

I mention this remark here because one of the sure signs of Kant's victory over the Bible was the scandal that so many Victorian intellectuals and Anglican divines took when they read the story of Saul's slaughter of the Amalekites under God's direct orders. Saul obeys the divine dictate to slaughter "every man and woman, babe and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" of the enemy (1 Samuel 15:3). But he decides, on his own authority, to spare the king—a momentary "lapse" of human mercy that prompts Samuel, Saul's divinely appointed prophet, to rebuke him for his disobedience, at which point Saul dutifully kills the Amalekite king before the Lord's altar. On the whole, nineteenth-century readers were genuinely shocked at such passages, while many twentieth-century scoffers give the impression that they seek out such

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passages so that they can take a kind of impish delight in making believers uncomfortable.

Far from wanting to join the professional sneerers, I merely wish to point out that such a sensation of discomfiture was simply unknown in ancient and medieval times among Jewish and Christian writers (except perhaps Ambrose and Origen, who allegorized the passages). Now, however, the situation is quite otherwise: uneasiness against the warrior God of the Old Testament is widespread, most especially among believers, and for precisely the reasons that Novak adduces: the victory of Kant over metaphysics and theology.

That victory is not entirely a matter for dismay, in my opinion, as the example of Islam suggests. Consider the matter of the stoning of adulterers, which, to the great horror of Westerners, is part of Islamic jurisprudence. That practice, as it happens, is not required by the Qur'an. In fact, it was introduced into Islam from *Jewish* law, according to an oral tradition transmitted by the second Caliph of Medina, Umar ibn al-Khattab (reigned A.D. 634-644):

> They brought to the Prophet, on whom be God's blessing and peace, a Jew and a Jewess who had committed fornication. He said to them, "What do you find in your book?" They said, "Our rabbis blacken the faces of the guilty and expose them to public ridicule." Abdullah ibn Salam [a convert to Islam from Judaism] said: "Messenger of God, tell the Jews to bring the Torah." They brought it, but a Jew put his hand over the verse which prescribes stoning [probably Deuteronomy 22:21-22] and began to read what came before and after it. Ibn Salam said to him, "Raise your hand," and there was the verse about stoning beneath his hand. The Messenger of God gave the order and they were stoned. . . . They were stoned on the level ground and I [Umar] saw the man leaning over the woman to shield her from the stones.

Now, Muhammad is obviously thinking of Moses when he orders the stoning of the fornicating pair, but the crucial point is that the Mosaic law being enforced here has reached the Prophet *unmediated by either Talmud or New Testament.* Moreover, for accidental reasons of history, Islam never passed through the "fiery brook" of the Enlightenment; its confrontation with Judaism and Christianity in the contemporary world is often intertwined with a simultaneous confrontation with the Enlightenment. The clash gets even more complicated by Islam's much higher doctrine of revelation, which makes an accommodation with secular Enlightenment morality even more painful than has proved to be the case with Judaism and Christianity. (Islam's high doctrine of revelation had such difficulty conceding legitimacy to the deliverances of reason that it eventually deprived Muslim philosophers of the oxygen needed for independent, rational reflection; and Muslim philosophy almost entirely died out with the death of Averroës in A.D. 1198.)

At least in certain formal respects, Islam can be described, after a fashion, as "Judaism without a Euthyphro problem," or Moses without a Talmud, so to speak—as the civil war in Algeria so amply testifies, where the most horrific acts of barbarity are perpetrated under religious auspices and in the name of the God of revelation. The Euthyphro problem lives on in today's headlines, and it seems to me that David Novak needs to probe this issue more deeply, for his own (admittedly quite mild) Enlightenment-bashing leaves him with more problems than he seems to realize.

I should mention that the author was kind enough to mention in the preface that he was motivated to write *Natural Law in Judaism* because of certain critical remarks this reviewer made in these pages (June/July 1993) about his previous work, *Jewish Social Ethics.* While certainly flattering, his admission of my accidental influence on the present book rather deters me from making any further suggestions for his later work, lest I derail his research plans for the next few years. But despite my diffidence, I cannot help but feel that he needs to engage more deeply Singer's principle that no voice from Heaven can speak against justice and still be, as it claims, from Heaven. This principle seems intuitively true to most believing Jews and Christians today; but if it is true, then we come right back to the Euthyphro problem, rational morality's inevitable tension inside a religion of revelation.

The author also mentions, if only in passing, that the greatest vulnerability of natural law theory, both in ancient and modern times, stems from a kind of cultural myopia that too easily reads in one's own local customs or prejudices as "natural," as in Aristotle's view that women are naturally inferior to men or St. Paul's assertion that "nature teaches" that long hair on a man is a disgrace but on a woman is her glory (1 Corinthians 11:14-15). Novak's concession reminded me of a similar point made by Yves Simon, one that must be borne in mind by all natural law theorists:

> For a number of years we have been witnessing a tendency . . . to assume that natural law decides, with the universality proper to the necessity of essences, incomparably more issues than it is actually able to decide. There is a tendency to treat in terms of natural law questions which call for treatment in terms of prudence. . . . People are quick to realize what is weak, or dishonest, in pretending to decide by the axioms of natural law, or by airtight deduction from these axioms, questions that really cannot be solved

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> except by the obscure methods of prudence, and they gladly extend to all theory of natural law the contempt that they rightly feel toward such sophistry. Thus, whereas an ideological current marked by relativistic and evolutionistic beliefs may cause a situation strongly unfavorable to the theory of natural law, ideological currents expressive of an eagerness to believe that some things are right and some things wrong by nature may cause another kind of difficulty and call for a supplement of wisdom on our part.

Russell Hittinger echoes this warning when he points out that "in our time and culture, natural law is invoked as a response to the breakdown of tradition, to moral relativism and nihilism, to various species of utilitarianism, and to legal positivism. It is expected to be an all-purpose antidote to the estrangements of modernity. Called upon to remediate more than reasonably can be expected, natural law is liable to descend into ideology."

But how does one distinguish between the genuine teachings of nature and the easy ideological import masquerading as the real article? Novak is not the only one who skirts this issue; in fact it marks off a theme too rarely treated across the spectrum of natural law theorists. But unless the issue is treated and resolved, the whole superstructure of natural law could come tumbling down like Samson's Philistine temple and bury the theory alive. At some point in the future, it seems to me, Novak will need to ask what gets included in natural law: the immorality of contraception? of polygamy? of income-tax evasion? the morality of judicial review? of democratic over theocratic government? of no-fault divorce law?

These rejoinders, however, are mere cavils when set against the greater achievement of this book. The author's mind is blissfully free of those stale, hoary categories that have led to Judaism's marginalization, and Novak has also mastered a staggeringly large amount of learning, both Talmudic and philosophical, that he is able to wear lightly. There is something to learn on every page (especially for the Gentile reader) and yet the material is presented so that the text flows easily.

At one point, Novak quotes the Talmud to the effect that "when one grasps too much, one grasps nothing; when one grasps something less, something indeed is grasped." This also happens to catch the essence of the author's own scholarship, for he knows just the right text to cite to illustrate his point, yet without overly burdening the reader. (Printing the references as true footnotes, that is, at the bottom of the page rather than as endnotes at the back of the book, also trims a good half-hour off one's reading time.)

I expect *Natural Law in Judaism* will prove even more illuminating for Christians (and secularists) than it will for most Jews. As the author says at one point, "An old Jewish proverb has it, when on the right road, one is bound to meet other travellers." Speaking at least for this traveller, I cannot imagine having a more learned, affable, and lucid companion along the way than David Novak. F1

The Postmodern

At last we know all truth is gray: no more
Faith's raucous rhetoric, this blinding trap
Of absolutes, this brightly colored map
Of good and bad: our ocean has no shore.
Dogmatic truth is chimera: deplore
All arrogance: the massive gray will sap
The sparkling hues of bigotry, and cap
The rainbow, mask the sun, make dullness soar.
    Yet tiny, fleeting hesitations lurk
    Behind the storied billows of the cloud
    Like sparkling, prism'd glory in the murk:
    The freedom of the gray becomes a shroud.
Where nothing can be false, truth must away—
Not least the truth that all my world is gray.

D. A. Carson

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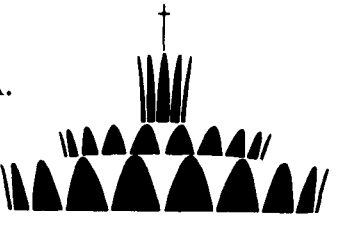

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Books In Review

Old Ghosts

Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America. By John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr. *Yale University Press. 475 pp. $30.*

The Haunted Wood: Soviet Espionage in America—The Stalin Era. By Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev. *Random House. 402 pp. $30.*

***Reviewed by* Andrew J. Bacevich**

To label the period after 1945 "The Cold War" is to misconstrue the ideological contours of our times. In the decades following the Second World War, Americans found themselves embroiled in not one but at least two cold wars. The seemingly more dangerous of the two—the political and military struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union—ended abruptly in 1989. With amazingly little fuss, the Soviets simply gave up. They abandoned their empire. When in short order their country began to disintegrate, they could barely rouse themselves to protest. It soon became apparent that this cold war—the contest between democratic capitalism and Marxism-Leninism—had effectively resolved itself years earlier. Somewhere along the line, the long-suffering peoples of the Soviet Union had concluded that their revolution had been a cruel hoax not worth defending.

The second cold war, a conflict within the United States and throughout the West generally, has proven to be more durable. Already by the 1930s, belief that the antidote to capitalist repression and exploitation could be found only on the radical left had become an article of faith for leading members of the intelligentsia. For these self-styled progressives, the Bolshevik experiment in utopia provided both inspiration and model. In the West, revolution acquired an allure that persisted long after it had lost its appeal among those who actually lived under regimes erected on its principles.

Waged in highbrow journals or behind the scenes in labor unions, editorial offices, movie studios, and faculty clubs, this internal cold war has not attracted as much public attention as its external counterpart. There was, however, one exception: from the late 1940s to the early 1950s, a succession of exposés, spectacular trials, and headline-grabbing congressional investigations of domestic communism convulsed the nation and transformed the American political scene. The individuals raised to prominence by these events—Richard Nixon and Joseph McCarthy, Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley, Alger Hiss and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, to name only a few—almost immediately assumed iconic status. As individuals, they might be heroes, villains, or simply unlucky bystanders, depending upon one's political point of view. Yet it was as protagonist in a drama of surpassing moral and political significance that each would henceforth be remembered.

According to the left, the essence of that drama went like this: ambitious, unscrupulous politicians (like Nixon and McCarthy) abetted by neurotic and duplicitous informers (like Chambers and Bentley) victimized innocent citizens (like Hiss and the Rosenbergs) whose only "crime" lay in their commitment to working for a more humane and genuinely democratic order. The result was national hysteria and the de facto suspension of civil liberties for anyone hesitating to enlist in the anti-Communist crusade.

An odd collection of bedfellows—conservatives, Cold War liberals, and a few anti-Stalinist radicals—offered a different and more sinister interpretation. In their eyes, the "victims" of the anti-Communist crusade were not innocents. They were instead agents of Joseph Stalin, engaged in a conspiracy to subvert the existing constitutional order while promoting, by whatever means, the interests of the Soviet Union, even, and perhaps especially, at the expense of the United States. In this interpretation, the story was one of deception, treason, and betrayal.

These controversies of the forties and fifties remained contested terrain for years afterward. Yet with no small amount of skill, the left succeeded in setting the terms of the ensuing debate. In the literature, this became the period of the "Second Red Scare," a label implying paranoia and intolerance. The term McCarthyism, initially a reference to witch hunts and smear tactics, became an all-purpose code word used to place out of bounds questions about the implications of being a Communist Party member or fellow traveler. Despite the efforts by a few historians to show that some Americans actually were complicit in Soviet espionage, the impression prevailed that the controversies of the period had unnecessarily and irreparably harmed the American political system. In sophisticated quarters, at least, the anti-anti-Communists had secured the moral high ground.

By all rights, these two invaluable books should change all that. *Venona*, the product of two American historians, and *The Haunted Wood*, a collaboration of an American historian and a Russian KGB operative-turned-journalist, provide crushingly authoritative answers to questions that have lingered since the days when the charges and countercharges hurled by ex-Communists and alleged Communists riveted the nation's attention. How prevalent was the treason committed by Americans on behalf of Stalinist totalitarianism? How pervasive was Commu-

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nist influence in American government? Above all, who told the truth and who lied? In putting these issues to rest, the authors of these two volumes make it possible at long last to move on to new questions more relevant to the age in which we now live.

The two accounts cover much the same ground but in ways that complement rather than duplicate. The Venona project, subject of the study by John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, was a highly classified government effort to decrypt messages between the Kremlin and Soviet agents in the U.S. during the Second World War. During the period 1942-1946, as a result of production shortcuts undertaken due to the duress of war, Soviet codes, theoretically unbreakable, contained a fatal flaw. In 1943 American analysts identified this flaw. Through painstaking work, they managed by 1946 to decipher portions of transmissions that American intelligence had intercepted. That endeavor continued into the 1970s, by which time the National Security Agency (NSA) had deciphered in whole or in part nearly three thousand Soviet messages.

The Venona project did not by any means provide a complete picture of Soviet espionage in the United States. Despite the best efforts of the NSA code-breakers, many intercepts from the 1942-1946 period remain unbroken. Even during that period, U.S. military intelligence managed to intercept only a fraction of the encoded message traffic between Moscow and its intelligence operatives in Washington and New York. Above all, Soviet encryption procedures used before 1942 and after 1946 avoided the de-

THE CALVIN EXPERIENCE

C. Stephen Evans

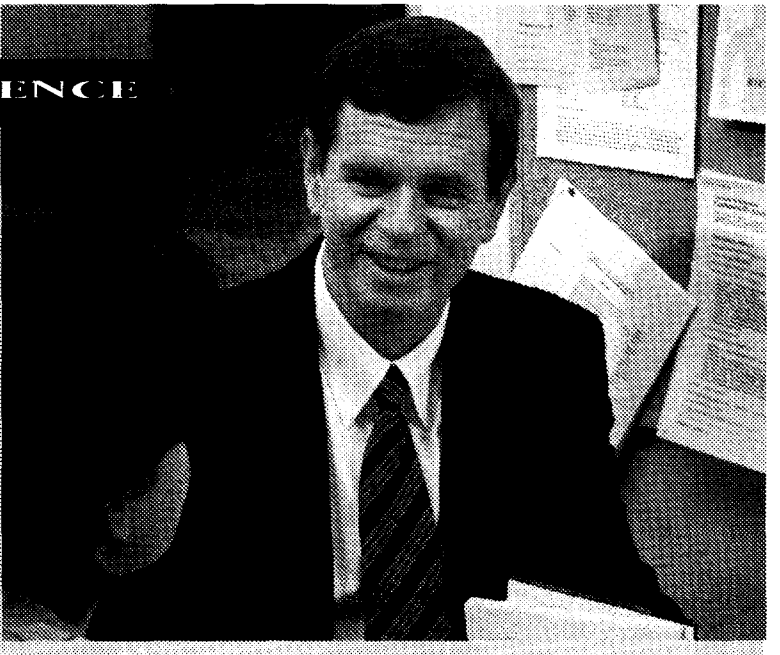
Ph.D. from Yale; author of *The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith* (Oxford University Press, 1996) and *Why Believe? Reason and Mystery as Pointers to God* (William B. Eerdmans, 1996), honored by *Christianity Today* as one of its top books of the year in 1997; internationally known scholar on the life and thought of Soren Kierkegaard; editor for *Books and Culture*; Calvin philosophy professor.

John E. Hare

British-born, Ph.D. from Princeton; author of *The Moral Gap* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); former staff associate in the House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee and American Philosophical Association Congressional Fellow; international reputation in Christian ethics and the morality of war and nuclear deterrence; Calvin professor of philosophy.

Del Ratzsch

Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts; author of *The Battle of Beginnings: Why Neither Side is Winning the Creation-Evolution Debate* (Inter Varsity Press, 1996), named by *Christianity Today* as one of the top books of the year; widely known scholar in the philosophy of science and in the relationship of science and religion; professor of philosophy at Calvin.



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fect that Venona had exploited. Such caveats notwithstanding, Venona produced an intelligence bonanza, as was immediately evident when the project, long a closely held secret, and its findings were finally declassified in 1995.

The material gathered by Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev, if acquired by less exotic means, is no less compelling. As a result of a 1993 agreement between Random House, SVR (Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, the successor to the KGB), and a cash-hungry association of retired KGB agents, Weinstein and Vassiliev paid for access to KGB operational files from the 1930s and 1940s. Yevgeny Primakov, now Russia's prime minister but then its intelligence chief, instructed the SVR archivists to provide only selected files; despite this limitation, *The Haunted Wood* tells a devastating story.

A TOO BRIEF SUMMARY of the findings offered by the two books would include the following points. Prior to and during World War II, the Soviet Union orchestrated a sustained campaign of espionage and subversion directed against the United States. Several hundred Americans, variously motivated by revolutionary romanticism, ideological fervor, or sheer venality, enlisted in that campaign. Some served the Soviet Union as spies, others as controllers, couriers, mail drops, or talent-spotters. Beginning with the New Deal, members of this Soviet-controlled apparatus infiltrated deep into the agencies of the federal bureaucracy. Entrance of the United States into World War II only increased the opportunities for espionage so that, for example, even the Office of Strategic Services, the wartime predecessor of the CIA, had well over a dozen Soviet agents on its payroll.

Stalin's agents rose to positions of prominence in the U.S. government: Alger Hiss, Laurence Duggan, and Noel Field (all State Department), Harry Dexter White (Treasury), Lauchlin Currie (assistant to President Franklin Roosevelt) routinely passed highly sensitive information to the Soviet Union. So too did many other lesser known or still unidentified figures scattered about from the War Department to defense industries. (Indeed, by 1944, a well-placed Soviet agent in the U.S. government had already tipped off his handlers as to the existence of the Venona project.) Internal security for the Manhattan Project was particularly lax. With Julius Rosenberg playing a vital role, American spies provided crucial technical information that accelerated Stalin's program to acquire the atomic bomb. For its part, the Communist Party USA routinely aided and abetted these efforts and accepted covert financial

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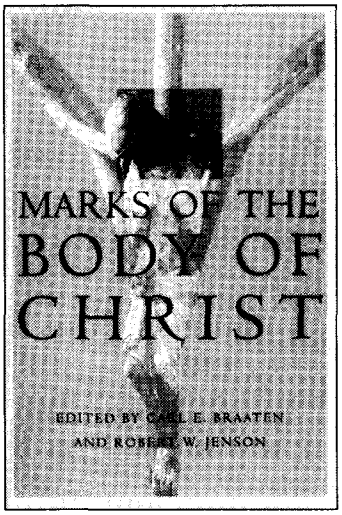

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subsidies from the Kremlin in return. The party's assertion that it was independent of Soviet control was fraudulent.

As with periodic allegations of presidential infidelities, it might be argued that none of this is really new. In fact, the findings contained in *Venona* and *The Haunted Wood* qualify as genuinely significant on several counts. First, they suggest that Stalin never viewed his wartime partnership with the United States as other than a temporary marriage of convenience. Given the scope and intensity of Soviet covert offensive, it becomes evident that the Cold War began not in postwar disputes over Germany and Eastern Europe but, as Haynes and Klehr write, as "a guerrilla action that Stalin had secretly started years before." The belief that more generous or forthcoming American policies, informed by a sympathetic understanding of Stalin's security concerns, might have averted the Cold War is an illusion.

SECOND, THESE TWO accounts establish beyond any reasonable doubt that witnesses such as Chambers testified truthfully when sounding the alarm about Communist subversion. Diehards will still contend that Hiss was innocent or that Julius Rosenberg was framed, much as some adamantly insist that Oswald did not act alone or that James Earl Ray did not assassinate Martin Luther King. At some point, the accumulation of evidence permits us to dismiss such people as crackpots. We are now well past that point with regard to the most controversial spy cases of the 1940s and 1950s.

Third, *Venona* and *The Haunted Wood* show that espionage at the behest of the Soviet Union was much more extensive than previously recognized. To dismiss it as the handiwork of a few misguided souls is to understate the problem by an order of magnitude. The existence of a network on such a vast scale effectively demolishes the notion of "McCarthyism before McCarthy"—the thesis advanced by some scholars that internal security reforms instituted by the Truman Administration after World War II were irrational, unnecessary, and motivated by political expediency. The gist of this argument is that Truman ignited the anti-Communist mania that McCarthy himself exploited shortly thereafter. In fact, Truman was responding to a serious threat that his predecessor had allowed to fester. That response was prudent and necessary, just as the larger American effort to contain the Soviet Union was prudent and necessary.

These conclusions do not justify or excuse the demagoguery of Senator McCarthy and his acolytes. They do not constitute a defense for

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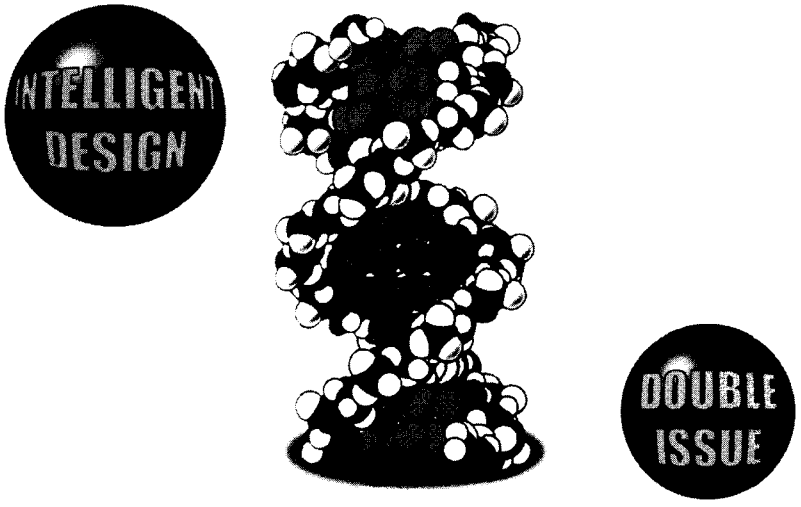

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every action taken under the rubric of eliminating subversion. (Ethel Rosenberg offers a case in point. That she was complicit in her husband's spying is beyond dispute; her offenses did not justify execution, however.) Nor should *Venona* and *The Haunted Wood* be read as suggesting that every American who flirted with communism or fell prey to an infatuation with the Soviet Union was guilty of treason. Indeed, these accounts deserve attention not because they offer an opportunity to settle old scores but because they provide a vehicle for moving beyond a debate that has long since outlived its usefulness.

Only by exorcising the ideological ghosts that have haunted national politics for the past half century will Americans rediscover the nexus of the issue that gave the domestic cold war significance in the first place: the threat posed by a radically materialist philosophy that in the name of "liberation" would snuff out even the possibility of authentic freedom. As was the case when the United States faced off against the Soviet Union, the ultimate question today turns on whether and how man relates to God. "At every point," observes Whittaker Chambers in *Witness*, "religion and politics interlace, and must do so more acutely as the conflict between the two great camps of men, those who reject and those who worship God, becomes irrepressible." By exorcising old ghosts, these two histories permit us to redirect our attention to the new fields on which that conflict continues.

Who Is My Friend?

Friendship in the Classical World. By David Konstan. *Cambridge University Press. 206 pp. $59.95 cloth, $18.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **Gilbert Meilaender**

Among the "first things" of life in the classical world of Greece and Rome was friendship. As an intimate, affectionate, and loyal bond between two (or a few) persons, a bond unlike those of kin or tribe in that it is not simply given with birth, friendship will always have about it something a little mysterious. In David Konstan's terms, it is an "achieved" rather than an "ascribed" relationship. "An achieved relationship does not necessarily mean one that depends essentially on free or personal choice. One may meet friends by accident and be drawn to them for mysterious reasons having little to do with decision."

Gilbert Meilaender *holds the Board of Directors Chair in Theological Ethics at Valparaiso University.*

Saint Paul Returns to the Movies

Robert Jewett

Looking at ten major Hollywood movies that focus on the theme of shame — *The Prince of Tides, Babette's Feast, Forrest Gump, Mr. Holland's Opus, Groundhog Day, Babe, Edge of the City, The Firm, Unforgiven,* and *The Shawshank Redemption* — Robert Jewett interprets them in the light of what Saint Paul's letters say on the subject. His compelling analysis not only shows the cinema's unique capacity to unmask one of the deepest dilemmas of the human heart, but also offers the revolutionary view that the triumph of grace over shameful status, circumstances, and experiences lies at the heart of Paul's theology.

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Konstan's account of friendship —which is historically, philologically, and philosophically informed—begins with Homeric Greece, proceeds through the classical and Hellenistic periods, discusses Roman views, and ends with some of the fourth-century church fathers in the world of late antiquity. This is a scholarly book, but one with some bite to its central thesis. Konstan wants to argue for a good bit of continuity in our understanding and experience of friendship. Against scholars who argue that friendship as we understand it does not exist prior to, say, the Renaissance, he contends that an "abiding image of friendship as an intimate relationship predicated on mutual affection and commitment" has persisted from ancient times to our own.

THIS DOES NOT mean that the history of friendship is without change. Thus, for example, where modern discussions of friendship might emphasize the importance of "self-disclosure as the basis for intimacy and trust between friends," ancient thinkers simply did not value self-disclosure. They praised qualities such as candor and frankness as essential for friendship, but, because they did not suppose that the most important thing about each of us is our uniqueness, they did not have to see in friendship a way by which one unique self builds a bridge to another. Likewise, although the ancients thought of friendship as a personal bond based on the mutual attractiveness of certain qualities, they did not emphasize individual or idiosyncratic traits as this basis. Instead, they focused on "traits that are good . . . rather than singular."

Allowing for such changes, Konstan still argues persuasively that the personal intimacy and affection that we today associate with friendship was also part of the ancient concept. Modern scholars have often argued that ancient friendship—certainly in the Homeric period but also later—was more an economic or political relationship than a personal one. It was marked more by "obligatory reciprocity" than by "sentiment." The contrary evidence marshaled by Konstan begins with philology. He suggests the necessity of distinguishing between the Greek words *philos* (friend) and *philia* (usually translated "friendship," but perhaps more accurately, he says, translated "loving relationship"). *Philia*, on his showing, may have a wide range of meanings, but, within the circle of those with whom one had affectionate relationships, the ancient Greeks were quite ready to designate some as friends in a narrower sense corresponding more closely to that "abiding image" of friendship we still share with them.

Konstan's argument is also philosophical. He readily grants that an element of reciprocity is built into the classical concept of friendship. Greek (and later Roman) thinkers often emphasized the usefulness of friends. Konstan is quite persuasive, however, in arguing that this alone does not reduce friendship to a selfish or mercenary relationship. Classical thinkers, he writes, "saw helpfulness as confirmation of kindly intentions" rather than as the ground or basis of those intentions. They "exploit metaphors of succor and riches to exalt, not reduce, the sense of an unselfish relationship." That is, far from thinking of friendship as grounded simply in utility, they pointed to the mutual helpfulness of friends in order to show what a wonderful bond it was. If, on occasion, Konstan seems to press this argument too far, bypassing a little too quickly the sense one sometimes gets that classical thinkers did have tendencies to ground friendship in utility, his argument nonetheless makes a strong case for a significant degree of overlap between ancient and modern views of friendship.

NO DOUBT THE single most important and influential piece of classical writing on friendship has been books VIII and IX of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, of which Konstan provides a lucid discussion in which he treats some of the issues noted above. For Aristotle there are three sources of friendship: usefulness, pleasure, and respect for character. This does not mean, however, that friendship can be reduced to utility, pleasure, or even respect. Friendship arises "through" or "on account of" these qualities but cannot be reduced to them. This is especially important to note with respect to the first form of friendship, which we are most likely to think of as a mere "bargain." Thus, Konstan notes, Aristotle never suggests that two people who are useful to each other are therefore automatically, and on that basis alone, friends. They may, of course, become friends. "In such a case the origin of the *philia* is in utility, but the affection is not reducible to the mutual appreciation of one another's serviceability." And, to press the matter still further, "even in the case of friendship that derives from regard for character, . . . there is no indication that all men with sufficient virtue and consequent admiration for one another are friends."

This case is powerfully argued. It is also quite important to our understanding of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The entire structure of Aristotle's ethic there is built upon the desire for *eudaimonia*, for happiness. Such an ethic of self-realization may have grave difficulty in really getting the good of the other person, the loved one, at the center of the agent's concern. It is, if anywhere, in books VIII and IX, in his discussion of friendship, that Aristotle attempts to do just that and thereby move beyond the confines of self-realization. Whether he really manages it I am a little less sure than Konstan is. He argues that Aristotle does not seek to derive *philia* from self-love. To be sure, the relevant passages are puzzling ones, but there are moments when Aristotle's argument never seems to transcend the individual's quest for personal happiness, which quest the friend then serves.

If friendship was among the "first things" of life in the classical world, its place changed significantly as Christian belief trans-

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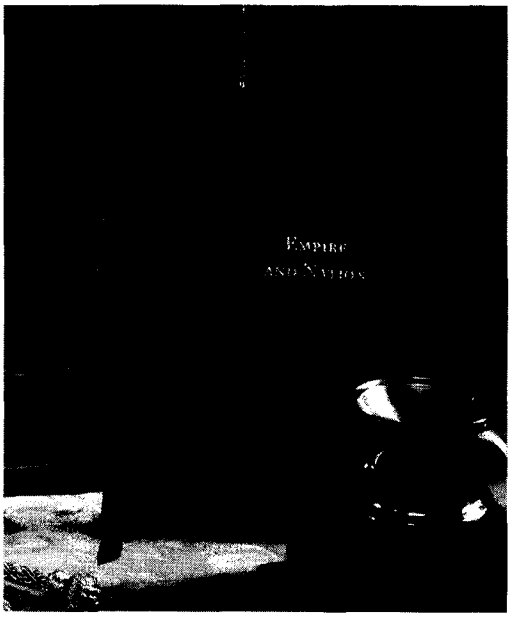

Two series of letters that have been described as "the wellsprings of nearly all ensuing debate on the limits of governmental power in the United States" are collected in this volume. The writings include *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*—the "farmer" being the gifted and courageous statesman John Dickinson and *Letters from the Federal Farmer*—he being the redoubtable Richard Henry Lee of Virginia. Together, Dickinson and Lee addressed the whole remarkable range of issues provoked by the crisis of British policies in North America, a crisis from which a new nation emerged from an overreaching empire. Dickinson wrote his *Letters* in opposition to the Townshend Acts by which the British Parliament in 1767 proposed to reorganize colonial customs. The publication of the *Letters* was, as Philip Davidson believes, "the most brilliant literary event of the entire Revolution." Forrest McDonald adds, "Their impact and their circulation were unapproached by any publication of the revolutionary period except Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*." Lee wrote in 1787 as an Anti-Federalist, and his *Letters* gained, as Charles Warren has noted, "much more widespread circulation and influence" than even the heralded *Federalist Papers*. Both sets of *Letters* deal, McDonald points out, "with the same question: the never-ending problem of the distribution of power in a broad and complex federal system." The Liberty Fund second edition includes a new preface by the editor in which he responds to research since the original edition of 1962.

Forrest McDonald is Professor of History at the University of Alabama and author also of ***E Pluribus Unum,*** among other works.

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formed the world of late antiquity. When the church fathers considered friendship, they were often less concerned with its normal sense than with "relations among monks, priests, or other devotees who lived together in religious communities." When Ambrose, for example, emphasized the importance of mutual self-disclosure among friends, he did not have in mind our contemporary concern for intimacy for its own sake. Indeed, he had in mind something quite different, something we might almost incline to see as contrary to friendship. "Self-disclosure, indeed, may work to advance the cohesion of small societies precisely by *inhibiting* private relations among individuals. . . . Under conditions of collective living, where group cohesion and spiritual progress were central concerns, the emphasis fell more on generalized charity and the need for honesty than on ties between pairs of individuals which might be disruptive to the community" (emphasis added). The patristic discussion of friendship thus became a discussion of what we regard as a rather different sort of love: a brotherly love founded not on special preference but simply on a shared religious commitment. "The effects of this shift are discernible as well outside the restricted sphere of the cloister and seminary."

MANY CHRISTIAN WRITERS, especially after the fourth century, avoided the language of friendship altogether—perhaps, Konstan suggests, because the classical notion of friendship, which required a mutual awareness of virtue, seemed incompatible with Christian humility and with the sense that all of one's virtue was ultimately the fruit of God's grace. Even Christian thinkers who did continue to use the language of friendship turned more often to the language of brotherhood, "preferring to represent themselves as brothers united in Christ by virtue of their faith rather than claim the name of friend on the basis of their own excellence."

On Konstan's account, Christians in the early centuries of the Christian era were "profoundly reevaluating the kinds of solidarity that had characterized the social life of classical antiquity." "When friendships were the noblest things in the world," Jeremy Taylor once wrote, "charity was little." And, by contrast, a world in which charity was magnified was one in which friendship was nudged more and more toward the periphery of life. The displacement of *philia* from the center of life was not just a kind of theoretical issue. It was a vast transformation of Western Civilization and an important shift in our understanding of good character and the good life. This shift helped to create a world in which—not only for better but also for worse—equality rather than special preference moved to the center of public consciousness. Konstan's account will serve well anyone who wants to learn more about the classical thinkers who gave us our language and our understanding of friendship, or who wants to contemplate what we have made of that inheritance.

1642 and All That

THE COUSINS' WARS: RELIGION, POLITICS, CIVIL WARFARE, AND THE TRIUMPH OF ANGLO-AMERICA. By KEVIN PHILLIPS. *Basic. 651 pp. $32.*

***Reviewed by* Mark A. Noll**

PERCEPTIVE STUDENTS of the 1996 presidential election have noticed an uncanny trend that links geography, religion, and politics. Take the nine regions into which the U.S. Census Bureau divides the country. Rank the regions according to the percentage of the people who, according to an Angus Reid poll taken right before the election, affirm major tenets of evangelical faith and rank "high" in the practice of their religion. Then rank the same regions again according to the per-

MARK A. NOLL *is Professor of History at Wheaton College.*

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centage of the popular vote for Bob Dole. You find that the rankings are almost identical (the Mountain region being the only exception: high support for Dole but relatively low in evangelical practice).

While many pundits ignored such relationships, sophisticated commentators knew they deserved serious analysis. An affinity for broad patterns of political and cultural understanding has been a driving force behind Kevin Phillips' many books, beginning with *The Emerging Republican Majority* (1969). Its argument that the Republican Party would increasingly become the majority party of the South and that, on the basis of this realignment, a new conservatism would become much more important in American public life was a remarkably prescient forecast that, in fact, has described much of the nation's electoral history over the last three decades.

Now Phillips has published a sprawling, audacious book which suggests that broad cultural analysis should be extended back in time and out in space in order to grasp essential features of American and British society over the last four centuries. By comparison to the considerations of this book, the United States' recent election returns are mere epiphenomena. But, Phillips implies, those who seek intellectual purchase on these and other contemporary developments would do well to study the past.

THE ARGUMENTS OF *The Cousins' Wars* shy away from putting the past to use for predicting the future. Rather, they are relentlessly historical in contending that the three great civil conflicts of modern Anglo-American history exerted an enormous influence in shaping nearly every aspect of American and British life, as well as substantial elements of world history. First was the English Civil War of 1642-1649, which led to the triumph of Parliament and its Puritan allies over King Charles I and his royalist supporters. Second was the American Revolution, 1775-1783, which Phillips successfully depicts as both a dispute *among* Britons—colonists vs. colonists, English vs. English, Scottish vs. Scottish, over the proper application of British law, custom, and political traditions—and a war for American Independence. Third is the American Civil War, 1861-1865, which in Phillips' vision sustained patterns of antagonism and principle whose major outlines had been drawn by the earlier conflicts. Phillips devotes almost five hundred pages to explicating the connections, recurring relationships, and symmetrical effects he observes in these three wars, while the last one hundred pages explain how he thinks this sequence of conflicts influenced American, British, and world history during the last 150 years.

The major difficulty in coming to terms with this book is the scope of what is attempted. It offers fairly detailed analyses of the three wars, it includes a series of mini-essays on the ways in which each of the wars resembles the other two, it provides lengthy accounts of strategy for each conflict, it attends patiently to national differences within the United Kingdom (English, Catholic Irish, Ulster Protestant, Scottish, even Welsh), it treats in detail non-English ethnic groups in the United States (especially the Germans and Irish), it gives full attention to geographical-political regions in the two nations (with many clear maps), it pauses at several places to chart the effects of the three wars on African Americans and Native Americans, it offers several provocative sallies about what America's military-political history has meant for Canada and Mexico, and it patiently unpacks a whole lot of detailed electoral history in trying to chart long-term political consequences of the wars.

A modern professional historian may not be the best person to say how well Phillips has done in putting all of this together. As professionals we publish research whose major effect is to verify more and more about less and less. A combination of detailed reading and

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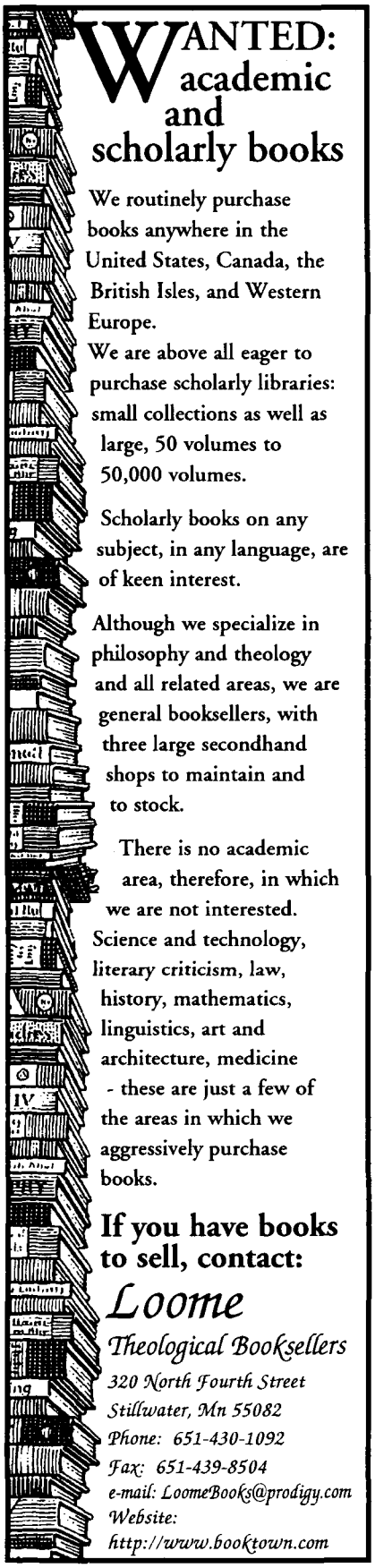

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broad-based interpretation like *The Cousins' Wars* is more likely to inspire grumpy huffing and puffing than reasoned response from my professional corner. Sinking to that level, I must point out that Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts Bay did *not* order the execution of Quakers, that John Witherspoon came from Scotland to become president of Princeton in 1768 not 1766, and that Methodists were growing much faster than Baptists in the period 1780 to 1860. But so what?

RISING ABOVE SUCH pettifogging, my immediate reaction is that, with perhaps one exception, Phillips has been remarkably successful in sustaining the major points he wants to make about these wars, their striking similarities, and their effects on British and American society. Phillips' very success, in fact, arises from taking up the quest for larger meanings.

He avoids, for example, a besetting sin of much professional history by treating Britain and America together, refusing to equate modern nation-states with hermetically sealed arenas of cause and effect. In this virtue, as throughout the book, Phillips follows historians who in recent decades have insisted on the unity of "North Atlantic" history—that is, Britain, modern Canada, the United States, the Caribbean islands, and adjacent coastal regions of Europe and South America touched by the dynamics of British imperial expansion. He specifies in some detail the constant flow of communications, immigrants, immigrants returning home, ideals, merchandise, books, ideas, and other cultural products that have knit the North Atlantic region together.

Phillips' conclusion that "religion, politics, war, and their interrelationships" constitute the major engine of history allows him to draw on expert work by historians who have begun to recover the determinative cultural significance of religion in British and American history. The reality that Phillips and these historians present is *not* that religion has been always an ennobling force. The abuses of Christianity have been many: religio-ethnic cleansing in Ireland and elsewhere, Bible-based mistreatment of Africans, religiously inspired riots (in London, Edinburgh, New York, Philadelphia, Cambridge, Mass.), and the exploitative use of religion to whip up partisan frenzy on both sides in all three conflicts. It *is* the case, however, that the Christian religion is salted very deeply into British and American culture, and that efforts to describe the past that neglect this presence—ennobling influences as well as demeaning uses—are simply bad history. Phillips understands the significance of religion for his history, and that understanding leads to some of the book's most useful arguments.

A WHOLE SET of those arguments features connections between religion and region. Phillips shows, for example, that the low church, dissenting Protestants of East Anglia (northeast of London) were strong for Cromwell in the English Civil War, sympathetic to American rebels during the Revolution, and eager for a Northern victory in the American Civil War. Moreover, settlers from East Anglia made up much of the migration to New England where a low church, dissenting Protestant influence became a (perhaps *the*) key to bringing on the American Revolution. In addition, a low church, dissenting Protestant outmigration from New England to the states of the Old Northwest and Upper Midwest laid the groundwork for reformist Whig and abolitionist Republican political strength on the eve of the Civil War. Phillips is able to trace similar trajectories from Royalist strongholds during the English Civil War to Loyalist regions of Revolutionary America and cavalier strongholds of support for the Confederacy. At several points Phillips cautions against simplistic geographical determinism, but his own reading shows that regional religious attachments have had great political influences that have

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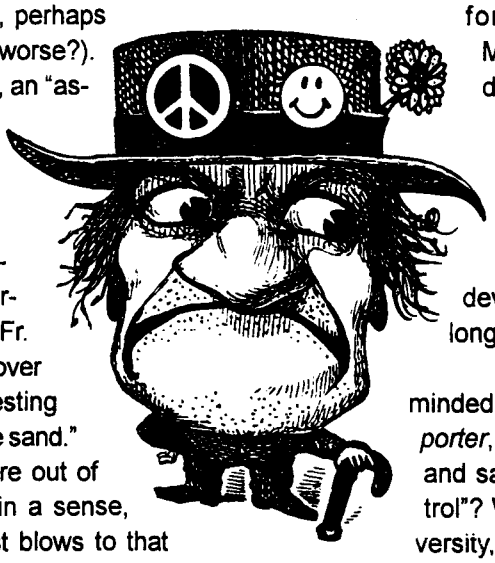
It's understandable that mod Catholics would be mad — surely they feel threatened, perhaps even irrelevant (and what could be worse?). We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an "assertively Roman Catholic" magazine, according to Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, have certainly felt their displeasure. For example, *Commonweal*, that elderly organ of juvenile Catholicism (which is now in the "afterglow of its glory years," according to Fr. Neuhaus) recently devoted its back cover to an attempt to ridicule us, suggesting we're an "ostrich" with our "head in the sand." The gist of the attack was that we're out of touch with liberal culture — true, in a sense, though we've landed lots of honest blows to that culture's proud chin. Earlier, *Commonweal* published a letter from a homosexual claiming that we're "offensive" and "reek of fascism." Ah, that good ole "F" word, so serviceable in the salad days of the 1960s.



The National Catholic Reporter, born in the 60s and still stuck there, has nonjudgmentally accused us of "rehashing conservative dogma," taking "cheap shots" at feminism, and being a "poisoned dart," while letter-writers in the *Reporter* have sensitively demonized us as "spiteful," "abusive," "vicious," and "offensive." But then, as Fr. Neuhaus has said, the *Reporter* "languishes in the backwaters of the revolution that was not to be" and is full of "rantings."

America, the liberal Jesuit weekly, has deemed our point of view "ugly" and (of course) "offensive," while a letter-writer has accused us of "pompous quaintness" and of promoting "the real heresy today," namely, "thought-control." Another letter-writer has suggested we're "a front" for Opus Dei. To that quaintly McCarthyite reader of *America*: We do solemnly swear that we are not now and never have been a front for Opus Dei. But then, who cares what's printed by the wilted flower children at *America*? After all, as Fr. Neuhaus has said, *America* has developed a "cranky" streak and "is no longer the influence that it once was."

Now, here's the kicker: The open-minded liberals at *Commonweal*, the *Reporter*, and *America* have banned our spicy and satirical ads. Isn't *that* "thought-control"? What happened to free speech, diversity, and inclusiveness? Have the liberals become stiff and rigid in their autumn years? *Newsweek* says we're "cheeky," Cardinal Law says we're "a sign of new life in the Church," and the *Los Angeles Times* says we're "influential." Apparently, we're just too bold, vigorous, and potent to tolerate. Yes, we've turned liberals into illiberals — and not even a warm hug can change that.

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survived over long periods of time.

Phillips' comparative perspective also allows him to explain why the American Revolution was a civil war and the American Civil War a revolution. In the Revolutionary War, the most aggressive opponents of American patriots (who were disproportionately Congregationalist or Ulster-Scot Presbyterian) were not King, Parliament, and British generals—in fact, several of the latter nurtured nearly traitorous sympathy for the American cause. Rather, the firmest opponents of American patriots were American loyalists—including Anglicans from the middle and northern colonies, Scottish-born merchants in port cities, and Scottish Highlanders in several southern colonies.

If the Revolution was America's first Civil War, it was no less the case that the Civil War was a great revolution. As Phillips puts it, "The loose, possibly unraveling U.S. Confederation of early 1861 [inherited from the Revolution] and the emerging nation-state of late 1865 were almost different countries." Prior to 1861, America was a politically fragile, slave-holding, agricultural, Protestant-dominated, and largely isolationist nation. In the period after 1865 it became politically unified, free, industrial, religiously plural, and a budding world power.

PHILLIPS' ABILITY to link the three wars hinges on his considerable success in making convincing conclusions about each of them individually. The English Civil War established the cultural and religious fault lines that in substantial measure defined the antagonists of the latter two wars. The American Revolution, despite the bitterness of its British-American and intra-American violence, enabled the United States and Britain to flourish, since both were spared what could only have been the ongoing, enervating exasperation of having to deal with each other as part of a single political entity. The victory of the North in the American Civil War was so thorough that the fault lines from the earlier wars in both Britain and America could no longer precipitate armed conflict. That result, in turn, led to the possibility of international Anglo-American cooperation,which began seriously before the end of the nineteenth century and climaxed spectacularly in the two world wars of the twentieth century.

Phillips argues these and other important theses with a wealth of detail and copious reference to existing historical scholarship. If there is a problem with the book, it is the rush toward the finish line. Phillips devotes short chapters at the end to arguing that wars have always been the key determinant of American electoral politics, that they were also the key to the imperial expansion of Britain and the United States, and that the worldwide spread of the English language was also materially advanced by the same conflicts. Perhaps so, but arguments about the twentieth-century, worldwide significance of the three Anglo-American wars are neither as amply discussed or persuasively documented as the book's earlier, and extraordinarily provocative, arguments about the meaning of the three wars for Britain and America in the period from 1642 to 1865.

Which may bring us back to the 1996 election. Political punditry in the United States, with only a few exceptions, thrives on instant analysis. It has little use for history. How odd, and yet how beneficial, for one of the nation's most successful political pundits to write a book like *The Cousins' Wars*, for apart from the many fruitful discussions it should kindle among historians, it also suggests that only a flight from punditry will unlock the broader meaning of contemporary American politics.

The Lord crieth

'What man is he that desires life and yearns to see better days?' *and if hearing him you answer, 'I am he'*...We shall run with unspeakable sweetness, we shall share by patience in the sufferings of Christ, that we may desire to be partakers also of his kingdom. Amen. (ST. BENEDICT FROM HIS RULE)

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The Archetypes in the Machine

TECHGNOSIS: MYTH, MAGIC, AND MYSTICISM IN THE AGE OF INFORMATION. By ERIK DAVIS. *Harmony. 368 pp. $25.*

***Reviewed by* John J. Reilly**

EARLY ON IN THIS fascinating survey of the spiritual dimension of cyberculture, Erik Davis observes that "the spiritual imagination seizes information technology for its own purposes." The spiritual imagination was not born yesterday; it is the ancient homeland of hermeticism,

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alchemy, and shamanism. Researchers into modern occultism have been astonished by the high percentage of their subjects who work in computer-related industries. It seems that these ancient ways of thinking work better in cyberspace, where consensual realities can be easily constructed. However, just because something is constructed does not mean that it is controlled. If you believe Davis, Hermes Trismegistus is the ruling spirit of the Internet. The god of communication is known to be a trickster.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE of cyberculture is autonomy, for reasons that are more logical than mystical. That irritating prefix, "cyber," is derived from the Greek word for "pilot," and it can be applied to any kind of self-regulating system. The trick is just to use the output of the system, which is the system's own behavior, for the new input that directs the system's next action. Some such process of autonomous guidance underlies systems from self-regulating valves, as in flush toilets, to the autopilots on jet aircraft.

The paradigm case of a cybernetic control system is Adam Smith's "Invisible Hand." Wages are inputs that determine consumer prices, which are inputs for material costs, which are inputs for wages, and good luck predicting what these linked loops will do. That is the other major point about cybernetic systems: simple though their components may be, their behavior quickly takes on a life of its own.

While purely mechanical systems can be self-regulating to some degree, cybernetic principles apply most thoroughly when only information is being manipulated. The Internet is the most conspicuous application of information theory today, though the author notes many other ways in which the "triumph of technique" so deplored by Jacques Ellul both antedated the Internet and provides the context in which it now operates. The spiritual techniques of G. I. Gurdjieff and of the Church of Scientology, for instance, which involve the close monitoring of subjective states in order to produce new states, have a strong cybernetic flavor. The significance of computers is that we now have technologies that let us externalize and share subjective states in ways that had not previously been possible. Computer networks, in effect, permit the creation of "public spaces" in which magic works.

The most colorful, and certainly the most harmless, example of a virtual world is a MUD, or Multi-User Dungeon. As the name implies, MUDers are people who are very interested in sword-and-sorcery fiction and who also have access to computer networks that can link them together in real time. Early MUDs were primitive affairs where the moves in a game appeared simply as text. The MUD program generates a narrative that prompts the players to choose from a set of possible actions. Choosing one, you type in the name of your opponent and the appropriate magic word. If you chose correctly, the MUD informs you that he has been turned into a frog. Your online persona, called an "avatar," can acquire powers and weapons as the game progresses. Finally, a player might join the demiurges (more prosaically known as "systems operators," or "sysops") who control the "laws" of the MUD world.

THIS CULTIVATION of the imagination with the hope of affecting an intersubjective reality is exactly what ritual magicians do, and a surprising number of them choose to do it online. Technopaganism is, probably, a minor factor in the religious life of "meat space" (cyberspeak for the real world), but it is a characteristic feature of spiritual life online. Just as you can play games with other players online, so you can hold rituals in private chat rooms where you attempt to influence real pagan gods.

Technopagans actually rank among the conservatives of cyber religion. "Chaos wizards," by contrast, are as skeptical about traditional magic as they are about the physical sciences. Such persons do not strongly distinguish ceremonies conducted online from their private psychological exercises, making cyberspace and the imagination seamless. What makes all this of more than folkloric interest is that cyberspace seems to have much the same effect on any human activity conducted online, whether magic, economics, or politics.

Online communities tend to throw off whatever restraints the real world imposes on them. The Internet interprets regulation the way it would interpret physical damage to a node in the system: it finds a way to work around it. No wonder that the leading political philosophy among heavy Internet users should be libertarianism.

Online libertarianism rejects hierarchy, of course. A hierarchy is just a broadcast system, a primitive structure in which a single sender spreads information to passive receivers. The whole point of the Internet, in contrast, is that it is a network, where every point is equally sender and receiver. Online libertarianism also rejects democracy, at least to the extent that democracy implies government with coercive powers. Voluntary associations of network points may act together to keep the network running, but beyond that, government is illegitimate.

DAVIS IS AWARE that "gnosticism" has become a cussword, and takes some care to distinguish the capitalized "Gnosis" of late antiquity from the gnostic-like movements of the spirit that have appeared in more recent times. Still, it is hard to find a better term to describe the total rejection, indeed the principled total rejection, of the restraints of society, God, and physics that flourishes online. The term "gnosticism" further commends itself because there are so few other kinds of ideology that oc-

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casion the literally cosmic paranoia often found on the Internet.

Gnostics of all sorts free themselves by identifying the hidden powers of this world that have sought to keep them deluded. The fact that some theory or report comes from a source without official authority actually recommends it, since official sources are part of the machinery of delusion. Before the Internet, such conjectures could spread only in an underground literature. Today, in contrast, anonymous rumors spread online instantly and universally. There are daily reports of terrorist conspiracies, of cover-ups of extraterrestrial contact, of UN troops being secretly stationed on American soil. However, there is nothing that the online world more dreads, or is more willing to credit, than the systematic use of mass psychology for the purposes of political control. In a purely mental world, after all, all control is thought control. The conspiracy theories most characteristic of online culture tend to impute the darkest spiritual wickedness to the conspirators.

Among the archetypical themes to which information culture gives new body, not least is the apocalypse. It should be emphasized that in this regard, as in many others, the content of the Internet is surprisingly conservative. There is more talk of the Second Coming of Christ than of any other eschatological event. However, even conventional premillennialism has a special flavor online. What amount to wire services have sprung up that do nothing but spread rumors of the Antichrist and reinterpret ordinary news as "signs of the times." Also, there are forms of the eschatological imagination that seem to have been waiting for the Internet to come along.

Teilhard de Chardin has become the patron saint of philosophers of the virtual world. His notion of a "noosphere," the region of mind just as the biosphere is the region of life, really does bear a striking resemblance to the Internet. (Teilhard shared Henri Bergson's doubts about the equivalence of thought and information, but that is often overlooked.) Teilhard's theology of history has more than a little to do with the widespread belief that the virtual world is moving toward a Singularity in the next century. Like Teilhard's Omega Point but without the Christian gloss, the Singularity will absorb the material world and end history as we have known it.

ANOTHER VARIATION on the gnostic theme has been taken up by people who call themselves "Extropians" or "Transhumanists." They embrace the idea that the mind is just a computer made out of meat. The destiny of the species, they say, is to have the brains of its members turned into information and uploaded into the pleroma of the Internet. Thus they hope to become ghosts in the world machine.

Discussions of the Internet are prone to more than their share of hype and scary stuff. Davis quotes Marshall McLuhan to the effect that artificial information environments are the mystical body of Antichrist. Davis himself says that "Every phase of human development has its dark side, but the midnight face of technological globalization is as black as pitch." On the other hand, Davis is also quite aware that the Internet as we know it today is less a new frontier than a strip-mall with bad zoning. Despite its claims of perfect autonomy our newly wired world is really part of a larger episode in intellectual history. Noting the peculiar aptness of the Internet to postmodern analysis, Davis observes: "The fact that Parisian intellectuals and the new machines were unknowingly moving in tandem is itself evidence of the larger choreographies of history that such theorists deny."

Cybergnosticism is even more futile than earlier gnosticisms. The point of gnosticism is freedom from constraints, but the essence of cyber-technology is that any self-regulating system soon develops unexpected properties of its own. If you flee from the familiar bonds of matter, you will soon become enmeshed in unexpected structures of logic. That, I take it, is the meaning of the sentence with which *TechGnosis* ends: "Prometheus is hell-bent in the cockpit, but Hermes has snuck into Mission Control, and the matrix is ablaze with entangling tongues."

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How to Read the Bible

THINKING BIBLICALLY: EXEGETICAL AND HERMENEUTICAL STUDIES. By ANDRÉ LACOCQUE and PAUL RICOEUR. Translated by David Pellauer. *University of Chicago Press. 441 pp. $30.*

Reviewed by
Robert Louis Wilken

IN THE WAKE of the Enlightenment's assault on tradition no field of theology has suffered more than the study of the Bible. With the emergence of "scientific" history in the nineteenth century and of new disciplines such as archaeology, the Bible came to be seen as less a book of the Church than as a mere artifact of the ancient Near East. Accordingly, it was to be interpreted within the context of the milieu in which it arose, the cultural and religious world that existed prior to the beginning of Christianity. What the Church made of the Bible, how it was used and interpreted within Christian tradition, was seen as tangential to the task of understanding what the books of the Bible meant when they were first composed.

The Reformation principle of *sola scriptura,* though it may appear also to have set the Scriptures off from the Church's tradition, was an ecclesiastical principle. The reformers assumed that the Bible was a Christian book, that it was divinely inspired, and that it ought to be understood and interpreted in relation to the Church's creeds, worship, sacraments, and moral codes. Martin Luther, for example, took the plural form of the Hebrew word for God, *elohim,* in the verse "Let *us* make man in *our* image" (Genesis 1:26) as evidence for the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

However, when the Reformation notion of *sola scriptura* was combined with the new historical scholarship, the links between the Bible and the Church were severed and the Bible came to be viewed, paradoxically, as alien to the very tradition that had produced it and handed it down over the centuries. Its interpretation was chiefly an historical enterprise, the examination of a body of ancient religious literature carried on independently of the communities that lived by it. The idea that the Nicene Creed, for example, might have something to do with the interpretation of the New Testament appeared implausible.

THE HISTORICAL APPROACH to the Scriptures is here to stay. The publication of encyclopedias, commentaries, and archaeological studies, not to mention the popularity of TV programs and magazines on the Bible, make clear that the public's appetite for historical information about the Bible and its world is almost insatiable. In colleges and universities all over the country courses on the Bible are among the most popular. At the University of Virginia where I teach, introductory lecture courses on the Bible draw hundreds of students each semester.

Yet it has not gone unnoticed, at least in certain quarters, that the Bible one hears about in these classes or reads about in encyclopedias is not the Bible read in churches and synagogues. It is not Sacred Writ or the Holy Scriptures or the Word of God. It is a collection of disparate, and sometimes contradictory, ancient documents that have been arbitrarily brought together between the covers of a single book.

Thinking Biblically is an effort to rediscover the other Bible, the book of the Church, and it joins a growing library of works spawned by mounting dissatisfaction with the hegemony of the historical-critical approach to the Scriptures. As the authors make clear in the preface, the biblical text is not simply an object from the past lying inert awaiting the scalpel of the scholar, a "cadaver handed over for autopsy." It is a living thing whose interpretation requires that one posit an intimate connection between the text and the community that reads it. To consider the text as finished and complete at the time of its final editing in antiquity, they say, would be "as though one were to give the funeral eulogy of someone yet alive."

ANDRÉ LACOCQUE is a biblical scholar and Paul Ricoeur a philosopher, and they have marshalled their quite different intellectual skills to interpret certain texts from the Hebrew Bible, the Christian Old Testament. The volume takes the form of parallel essays on what they call "strong texts": Genesis 2-3, Psalm 22 ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"), the Song of Songs, Exodus 3:14 ("God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'"), the Joseph story in Genesis 44, and others. In most cases LaCocque first prepared an essay on the text, Ricoeur responded, and each revised in light of what the other had said.

The book assumes, at least in theory, that the subsequent history of the biblical text, its role within Jewish and Christian tradition, can, indeed must, be a factor in its interpretation. The argument is developed more fully in Ricoeur's essays, but in his chapters LaCocque discusses not only the "original" setting of the text but also its reinterpretation, particularly within later books of the Old Testament and, more briefly, within the New Testament and later Jewish tradition.

As a collaborative effort the project is only partially successful, and I suspect most readers will find themselves more drawn to Ricoeur's chapters than to LaCocque's. It is not that LaCocque does not have learned and illuminating things to say. He has perceptive comments on similarities between the patriarch Joseph and the prophet Daniel and on the "my" in "my God my God" of Psalm 22. The psalmist does not, as often in the psalter, say "our" God or the God of our fathers, but "my" God. It is not "our" God who has forsaken me, he says, but "my God," the

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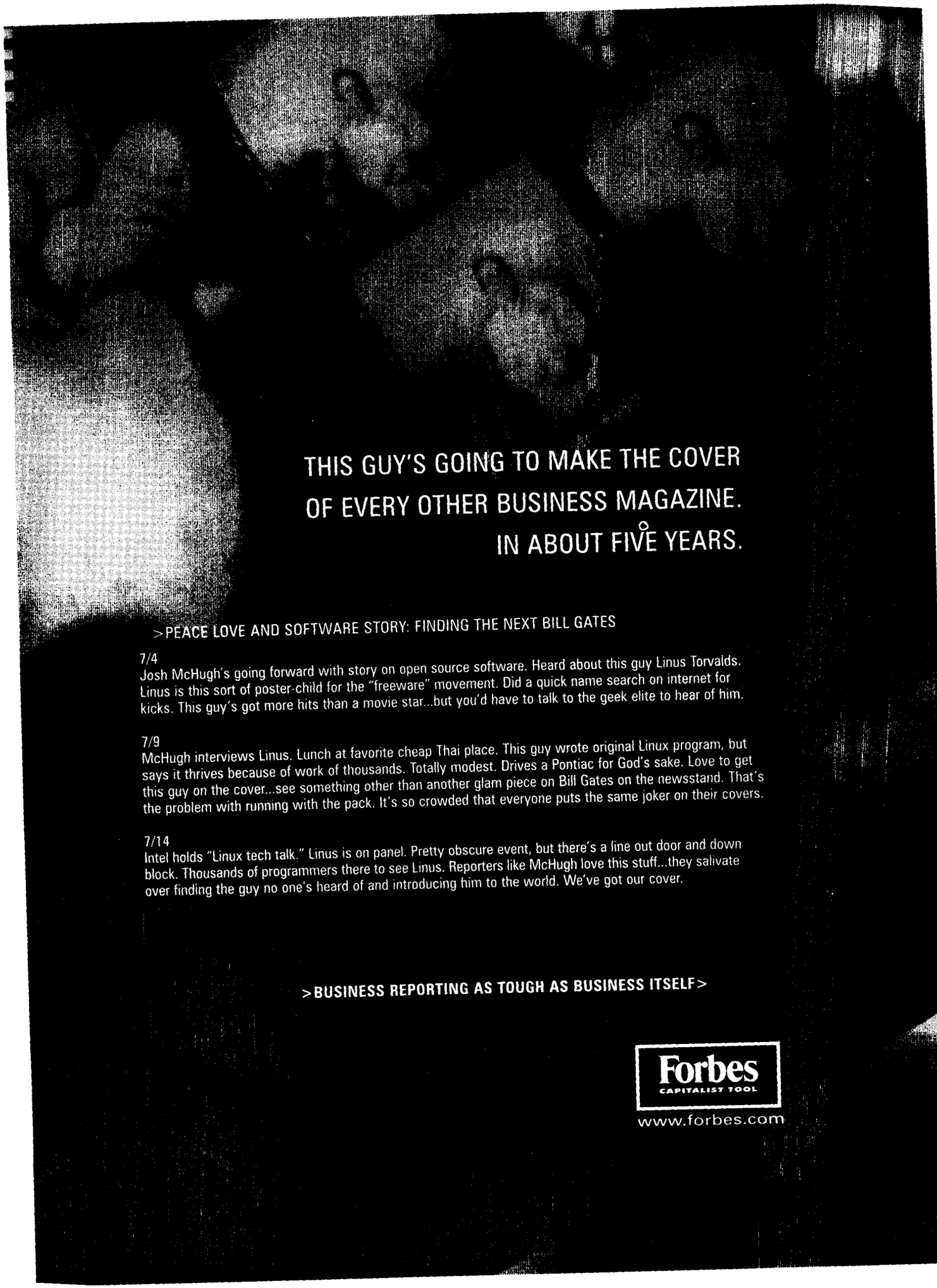

THIS GUY'S GOING TO MAKE THE COVER OF EVERY OTHER BUSINESS MAGAZINE. IN ABOUT FIVE YEARS.

>PEACE LOVE AND SOFTWARE STORY: FINDING THE NEXT BILL GATES

7/4
Josh McHugh's going forward with story on open source software. Heard about this guy Linus Torvalds. Linus is this sort of poster-child for the "freeware" movement. Did a quick name search on internet for kicks. This guy's got more hits than a movie star...but you'd have to talk to the geek elite to hear of him.

7/9
McHugh interviews Linus. Lunch at favorite cheap Thai place. This guy wrote original Linux program, but says it thrives because of work of thousands. Totally modest. Drives a Pontiac for God's sake. Love to get this guy on the cover...see something other than another glam piece on Bill Gates on the newsstand. That's the problem with running with the pack. It's so crowded that everyone puts the same joker on their covers.

7/14
Intel holds "Linux tech talk." Linus is on panel. Pretty obscure event, but there's a line out door and down block. Thousands of programmers there to see Linus. Reporters like McHugh love this stuff...they salivate over finding the guy no one's heard of and introducing him to the world. We've got our cover.

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one I used to trust and who remains in all circumstances "my" God.

Yet for LaCocque the Old Testament remains chiefly a book of the ancient Near East, and though he will on occasion quote a Jewish midrash (though no ancient or medieval Christian interpreter) and cite Kierkegaard on Genesis 22 or Thomas Mann on the Joseph story, he does not stray far from the constricted world of academic biblical scholarship. For example, after the nice paragraphs on "my God" in Psalm 22, he undermines his insight with a tired sociological observation from a fellow scholar that the reference to a "personal God" originally occurred in "small-scale family worship in a setting of primary-group rituals." So much for "my God."

At times the fruits of collaboration are hard to discern, as in the two chapters on the Song of Songs. LaCocque's essay offers what he seems to consider a bold interpretation of the historical Song of Songs. In his view the Song is a love poem that glorifies *eros*. Not satisfied, however, to let things stand with this rather commonplace interpretation, he goes on to say that its purpose is "subversive," it strums the chord of "free love," the poem makes no sense if the lovers are "legitimately married," its liberating intention cannot be integrated into a "bourgeois mentality," it cannot be the work of a scribe, i.e., a representative of a "conservative party," it de-moralizes sex, its spirit is irreligious and irreverent, and, most telling, it cannot be read as an allegory "for the use of the straightlaced on the intimate relations between God and Israel (even less, of course, between Christ and the Church)." "The language of the author is naturalistic and thus exposed to censorship by 'men of the cloth,' and parodylike, as it imitates in a mode of mockery the jargon of the fundamentalists."

Fortunately, Ricoeur ignores such fatuousness and largely goes his own way. His essay on the Song, pointedly titled "The Nuptial Metaphor," is astute and perceptive. He has has taken the time to read what Christians (and Jews) have made of the Song of Songs in later tradition, and implies that whatever arguments LaCocque might have against an allegorical reading of the book, they are beside the point. For an "intersecting reading," writes Ricoeur, "it does not matter whether the allegorical meaning was intended by the author of the Song of Songs, nor that the text itself give objective indications of such a reading."

THE KEY TO the interpretation of the Song (and by implication the Bible as a whole), says Ricoeur, is to be found in its "use," or perhaps better, its "re-use." The Song of Songs was seldom received as a whole, that is read in its entirety; it was known through citations of specific passages or allusions in the liturgy and in prayers, in homilies and spiritual writings, and in theological works. Through citation the text was set in new contexts and its words served to fill the gap between the new situations and the old. In other words, the book's use created a new "us" for the text. "In this way," he writes, "an exchange is brought about between the rite and the poem." "The rite opens the space of 'sacramental mystery' to the poem, the poem gives the rite the rightness of an appropriate word."

As an example (drawing on *Lectures du Cantique des Cantiques*, the fine book by the French scholar Anne-Marie Pelletier) he cites a passage from St. Ambrose on the catechumens: "You must approach the altar. . . . The angels are watching, they have seen you approaching. . . . Thus they have asked: 'Who is this who rises so white from the desert?' You have approached the altar. The Lord Jesus calls you or calls your soul or the Church, and says, 'Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth'" (Song of Songs 1:1).

Two convictions underlie such "re-use," says Ricoeur. First, the Scripture is a vast field of words and images bound together by the central story of the Bible. And second, "the spiritual sense is the sense intended by the author, that is, in the last analysis, by the Holy Spirit, who inspires the author." "In this sense, the allegorical use of the Song of Songs is not aware of itself as an effect of reading, as the creation of new meaning through reinterpretation."

Although the term "new" is ill-chosen, Ricoeur's point is well taken. The spiritual sense *is* the sense intended by the author, because the Bible is given by God. Origen of Alexandria once observed in a sermon that there would be no point in reading the book in church (he was preaching on Leviticus!) "unless the readers received some edification from it."

Allegory is not simply a technique for deriving meaning from the biblical text; it is also a way of saying things with different words and images. Some passages of Scripture are allegorical by intention, such as the story of the poor man and the ewe-lamb told by Nathan to David (2 Samuel 11), or the parable of the sower. But there are others things and words and images, e.g., the rock in the desert or the burning bush, that are capable of acquiring a sense that is deeper and richer than the surface meaning. And it delights the mind and pleases the soul to think of one thing in terms of another. Would the writings of St. Bernard or St. Theresa be able to touch so deeply (and so affectively) if they were shorn of the erotic and carnal language provided (and legitimated) by the Song of Songs?

YET, THERE REMAINS that intrusive word "new." In spite of the laudable intention to vindicate tradition, occasionally one senses here a lingering biblicism. Philosophy, the authors say in the preface, brings concepts, arguments, theories "that were forged outside the biblical field of thought." True, but not the full truth. As Ricoeur shows in his essay on Exodus 3:14, in medieval thought the question of "what is God" was driven by the question

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"who is God." Gilson even went so far as to speak of a "metaphysics of Exodus," one that was informed by the biblical tradition, in particular the verse, "I am who I am."

Ricoeur acknowledges that it is more accurate to think of the "Christianization of Hellenism" than the "Hellenization of Christianity." Would it not also be more reasonable to see the medieval philosophical (and exegetical) tradition as the *outgrowth* of biblical thought, as a *finding,* rather than as the creation of something new? What gave medieval thought as well as later Christian thinking its distinctive character was the fact of revelation, the givenness of the Bible. The "new" that is discovered in the text was only possible because the Bible was there in the first place. The creation of "new" meanings was less a creation of something new than a discovery of the old in new places or under new names. Biblical exegesis is ultimately about seeking that which is already known and finding that which must still be sought.

Augustine Then and Now

Living in Two Cities: Augustinian Trajectories in Political Thought. By Eugene TeSelle. *University of Scranton Press. 227 pp. $19.95.*

***Reviewed by* Glenn Tinder**

Augustine is a thinker for all seasons and all times in the portrait that emerges from Eugene TeSelle's *Living in Two Cities.* TeSelle is intimately familiar with the historical environment that Augustine inhabited and with great sensitivity examines ancient understandings of the city in order to illuminate Augustine's master concept of the two cities. More important to TeSelle than showing Augustine's relations with the ideas and realities of his own time, however, is the aim of uncovering his relations with our own time. Hence his subtitle: he wants to bring to light Augustine's relevance for later ages, particularly the age we are living through today.

Two Augustinian themes, as developed by TeSelle, will prove illuminating for most readers. One is that of man as a sojourner. The idea of course is commonplace in Christian literature, but TeSelle puts it to notably good use in discussing Augustine. He explores carefully the differences, in the eyes of antiquity, between a sojourner and an alien. To simplify drastically, a sojourner is more at home than an alien, yet not fully and finally so. The sojourner is a traveler, the alien an utter stranger. The distinction is useful, for it serves to characterize Augustine's sense of the human condition without exaggerating his pessimism. We do not really belong in even the best of earthly cities, yet not everything on earth is strange to us. We are not fitted for fulfillment through earthly citizenship, and thus are not political animals, in Aristotle's sense of the term. But nowhere in God's universe are we simply aliens.

The other theme worthy of note is that of peace. TeSelle sees the three main standards of collective existence, in Augustine, as love, justice, and peace. The latter is of far more interest to TeSelle than the former two, and this, I think, is because the Augustine of love and justice, while perhaps sublime, can seem distant and severe, whereas the Augustine of peace fits more easily into our own eclectic and undemanding times. Peace, to speak more summarily than TeSelle allows himself to speak, is a state of affairs that is far from ideal yet serves an essential earthly purpose, that of allowing members of the two cities to share a common life. Moreover, the standard of peace implicitly recognizes the range and diversity of values. Peace was important to Augustine not only because it was necessary in order that Christians might carry on Christian worship. It was important also because it allowed for the pursuit of various finite goods—goods other than God, yet still good "in all their finitude and transiency, and indeed in all their ambiguity." The ideal of peace has a humane breadth. In his desire for peace, Augustine is for almost anyone today a sympathetic and understandable thinker.

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The pages devoted to these themes are probing and subtle, and based on deep learning. TeSelle is careful to obscure nothing through hasty judgments, and no one, however thoroughly versed in Augustinian literature, is likely to read these pages without profit. Serious dangers, however, are inherent in TeSelle's approach, and these must be discussed with some care in order to take a proper measure of *Living in Two Cities.*

One of these dangers is that of insufficient definition. If a great deal of attention is given to the "trajectories" of a political philosophy, the outlines of the political philosophy itself may come to be blurred. The Augustine who emerges from *Living In Two Cities,* it must be said, is rather shadowy. Ways in which various ideas of Augustine's bear on present conditions and concerns are so carefully examined that the question of precisely what Augustine himself believed tends to be forgotten. This difficulty is aggravated by the author's conviction that the trajectories of Augustine's thought are often antithetical to one another. Thus, in a typical discussion, TeSelle notes that "one can regard human nature . . . as conflictual but argue that human society is consensual," as did Hobbes, or, in the manner of Rousseau and Marx, one can see human nature as consensual but society as conflictual. TeSelle concludes, as he very frequently does in dealing with such issues, that "Augustine shares something of both perspectives."

The conclusion is no doubt valid

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in some cases. Still, in facing major theoretical problems, Augustine must have occupied some rather definite positions, for otherwise his thought would never have attained coherence and he would not deserve to be studied by later generations. The aim of political thinking, it may be said, is the kind of self-definition achieved in assuming certain political positions. Thinking that reaches no clear positions has therefore failed. Many readers will wish that TeSelle, with all of his learning, had provided a somewhat more sharply focused picture of Augustine's political identity, that is, of the positions beneath the trajectories.

The other danger inherent in studying the trajectories, rather than the essential characteristics, of a political thinker is that the thinker will be unintentionally assimilated into later types of thought. Thus, as we try to discern Augustine's relevance to our century of political totalitarianism and moral confusion, he may gradually be given the shape of a twentieth-century thinker rather than the shape that was really his—that of a very late classical thinker witnessing the death-throes of the Roman Empire. In the process, we risk obscuring or even gravely distorting Augustine's real identity. This danger was not wholly avoided by Jean Bethke Elshtain in her recent *Augustine and the Limits of Politics,* nor is it wholly avoided by TeSelle. In reading either book, one comes to imagine a thinker who fits more readily into the present-day world, with its unique preconceptions and problems, than does the real Augustine. The truth is that for anyone who accepts with equanimity the reigning political principles of our time, Augustine is a somewhat forbidding figure. It may be worth noting why this is so.

AUGUSTINE DID NOT care greatly about liberty in the modern sense of the term, although he cared very much indeed about governmental respect for the proper sphere of the Church. Augustine was only uneasily and occasionally tolerant, and his settled position (against the Donatists, late in his life, as well as earlier against the pagans) was one of active intolerance. He was not a proponent of popular rule. He had no clear and comprehensive concept of the good society or of the best system of government even though he affirms various social and political norms. He probably would have found it incomprehensible to treat cultural diversity as an ideal, rather than merely as a difficulty to be dealt with as reasonably and humanely as possible. The chasm between the modern political mind and Augustine's can be felt acutely when one notes that, for Augustine, the kind of government one lives under is in the final analysis a matter of indifference.

To put the point more sharply with a current cliché, Augustine was, in his politics, flagrantly incorrect. This becomes particularly evident in his lack of concern with social reform. Indeed, the very idea of social reform was probably unknown to him, as it was to his time in general. Not that he was callous or uninformed with respect to conditions suffered by the poor. As a bishop he was quite familiar with such conditions and was used to devising measures for their amelioration in individual cases. But the idea of systematically and steadily improving society so that no one would suffer from hardships occasioned by the social order probably never occurred to him; and even if it had, one can doubt that the idea would have struck him as cogent or appealing.

I must hasten to say that TeSelle in no way contradicts these assertions. He even emphasizes, albeit briefly, the absence in Augustine's thought of any theory of reform. Nonetheless, he finds one of the trajectories of Augustine's thought to be that of "world transformation," and, while this may be historically accurate, in that certain ideas of Augustine's were so used, he does not ask whether such use can be truly in the spirit of Augustine—which, to say the least, is doubtful. And at another point he writes that "we would expect an Augustinian politics, under optimal circumstances, to seek change, perhaps fundamental change, but without overvaluing its achievements." But would such a politics be authentically Augustinian? Only by stretching considerably the boundaries of Augustinianism.

THE RESULT OF focusing on possibilities of this sort is to leave in the shadows the fundamentally eschatological character of Augustine's outlook. Although Augustine is often thought of as having inaugurated the Western philosophy of history, the only historical events that concerned him ultimately were those making up the history of salvation. TeSelle, in spite of his fine comments on sojourning, allows the reader to forget that what impelled Augustine to envision man as a sojourner was his radically es-

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chatological orientation.

Closely related to these matters is TeSelle's stress on Augustine's appreciation of finite values in all their variety. He writes that "there is a dynamic in human willing prior to and deeper than the decision for one love or the other, one city or the other, namely the human capacity for love of what seems good and the human desire for participation in it." Leaving aside the question of whether anything, for Augustine, is deeper in man than love for God, one may concede that Augustine was keenly attuned to the various pleasures and graces of ordinary human existence. But to say this without taking into account Augustine's intense and sustained fear of being sidetracked by finite goods in his pursuit of the one infinite good (illustrated by the uneasiness caused him on account of his sensuous enjoyment of hymns) is to intimate an inaccurate image of the great thinker and saint. TeSelle's suggestion that Augustine's God can be "inclusive," so that all true values are prized through and in God, is interesting; and it is true that for Augustine every real value was reflective of the Creator. It is at least arguable, however, that in his relations with sinful humanity on earth, Augustine's God was exclusive. Earthly man was too unstable and corrupt a creature to be granted the heavenly luxury of divine inclusiveness.

To use a term made familiar to us by Isaiah Berlin, Augustine was a hedgehog. He knew "one big thing." Most people in the modern liberal democratic nations seem to be foxes, knowing only many little things. This is one way of marking the distance between Augustine and modern times. For us, ideas like liberty and democracy are unproblematic because variety is unproblematic, and we are spontaneously tolerant because we are not sure that anything is so untrue or unrighteous as to be intolerable. Eschatology, concentrating as it does on the one big thing that comes with the end of history, is a strange and impossible attitude.

IN EMPHASIZING HOW different our world is from Augustine's, I do not mean to say that we have, in any normative sense, left Augustine behind. Perhaps the greatest evil involved in unduly assimilating Augustine into the modern era is that we thus deprive ourselves of a critical perspective on our historical situation. One need not reflect long on the moral and cultural indiscipline excused by modern liberty, or the varieties of irresponsibility occasioned by the enthronement of popular taste and opinion, or the moral relativism inferred from the standard of tolerance, or the unsought and unhappy circumstances sometimes wrought by self-confident reformers, to realize that the Augustinian perspective might be very useful to us.

TeSelle's sensitivity and care as an Augustinian scholar are exemplary, and his exploration of the relations between Augustine's thought and the political issues before us today is deeply thoughtful. But I fear that in concentrating on the trajectories, rather than the intrinsic features, of Augustine's outlook he does something contrary to his original intention: he obscures, as much as he clarifies, Augustine's contemporary relevance. He lets us think of Augustine as someone easily approachable, a natural ally and friend of modern man, and leaves in the background the refractory, radically eschatological Augustine our troubled and distracted age needs to hear.

BRIEFLY NOTED

LIVING IN THE IMAGE OF GOD: JEWISH TEACHINGS TO PERFECT THE WORLD. By IRVING GREENBERG with SHALOM FREEDMAN. *Jason Aronson. 366 pp. $35.*

Rabbi Irving Greenberg has become one of the most influential Jewish thinkers in America. Although an Orthodox rabbi for his entire career, "Yitz" (as he is known to just about everybody) has been forthright in his attempts to reach out to other Jews, especially Jews who do not share his Orthodoxy. That outreach has also led him to make a serious attempt to engage non-Jews, especially Christians, in serious discussion not only of ethical issues but of theological ones as well. All of this is most atypical of Jewish Orthodoxy today, which has largely become more insular in its relations with other Jews, and ever more steadfast in its refusal to engage Christians in anything even resembling theological dialogue. Through the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL), which he founded and developed, Rabbi Greenberg has made a serious impact on American Jewish life and beyond. This book is the edited record of a series of interviews conducted with Rabbi Greenberg by a devoted disciple, Shalom Freedman. Here they dis-

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cuss a wide variety of theologically charged topics: the Holocaust, feminism, the land and state of Israel, the Messiah. Rabbi Greenberg is a man of deep convictions and he expresses them well in these interviews. The format does have its limitations, however, and this reader, at least, has been left with the desire to see Greenberg develop his insights more systematically. For example, Rabbi Greenberg needs to explain what makes him still "Orthodox." Aside from his continued Orthodox practice, and avoidance of modern biblical criticism, it seems that his constant emphasis on the human ability and duty to "perfect the world" is something that would be much more at home in the several liberal, non-Orthodox (even anti-Orthodox) Judaisms available today. (In fact, many in the Orthodox community long ago ceased to regard Rabbi Greenberg as one of their own.)

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There is a beauty to a book emerging from a teacher-student relationship. But what-comes-next calls for either a more critical interviewer, or for Rabbi Greenberg to speak solely in his own, more consistent voice. Nevertheless, the thought-provoking character of these interviews makes the book well worth buying and reading.

— *David Novak*

LEISURE, THE BASIS OF CULTURE. By JOSEF PIEPER. Translated by Gerald Malsbary. *St. Augustine's Press. 160 pp. $11.95.*

LEISURE, THE BASIS OF CULTURE. By JOSEF PIEPER. Translated by Alexander Dru. *Liberty Fund. 137 pp. $17.*

In 1952, Josef Pieper was introduced to the English speaking world with the publication of *Leisure, the Basis of Culture,* a translation of two essays which had appeared originally in German in 1948. In a "Preface," Pieper himself explained the decision to join the two essays: "Their common origin or foundation might be stated in the following words: Culture depends for its very existence on leisure, and leisure, in its turn, is not possible unless it has a durable and consequently living link with the cultus, with divine worship." Pieper now has many more books in English, but *Leisure* has remained his most famous; it came to be regarded as a classic precisely because it so freshly articulated a classic notion of philosophy. In attempting to recover a sense of leisure that is not a state of idleness but an occasion for activity beyond the field of servile work, Pieper's modest volume reaffirmed the timelessness of the traditional Platonic and Aristotelian understanding of the value of philosophical reflection, and the reasonableness of the Augustinian and Thomistic understanding of the relationship between philosophy and theology. The book should be required reading, especially in a liberal arts curriculum, and now once again it can be, thanks to two new and affordable editions. Liberty Fund has reset the contents of the 1952 edition: the translation by Alexander Dru, together with the introductory essay by T. S. Eliot. St. Augustine's Press replaces Eliot's words with a new, brief introduction by Roger Scruton, and offers a new translation by Gerald Malsbary. Dru's original translation did not need replacing, but Malsbary's English, perhaps more literal, is a worthy rival. (Both new editions perpetuate a misquotation in the 1952 edition, where a passage from John Henry Newman replaces "terminate" with its near opposite, "seminate.") Liberty Fund's edition displays a polish characteristic of the press, and is available in handsome hardcover. St. Augustine's Press offers its paperback edition among the first of many more volumes of Pieper's writings it plans to publish, many of them for the first time in English. With its edition of *Leisure* St. Augustine's Press also offers some additional material that Liberty Fund does not: an index, some supplementary citations, and an appended "Retrospective of Reviews" consisting of editorial reactions to the 1952 publication, reprinted from such periodicals as the (London) *Spectator,* the *Times Literary Supplement,* the *New York Times Book Review, Commonweal,* and the *Nation.* It is thanks to this appendix that we can read Allen Tate praise Pieper's wisdom as helpful for understanding the "blight" of American democracy—and it is thanks to both of these publishers that Pieper's wisdom will be available to another generation.

— *Joshua P. Hochschild*

CHRISTIAN MYTHMAKERS. By ROLLAND HEIN. *Cornerstone. 260 pp. $13.95.*

Rolland Hein's *Christian Mythmakers* is a serviceable and readable survey of a tradition of Christian mythopoeic fiction that at its best "intimates something that cannot be told, but when fully known will be eternally satisfying." Hein

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traces the history of this genre from its modern origins in John Bunyan and George MacDonald through G. K. Chesterton and the Inklings Charles Williams, C. S. Lewis, and J. R. R. Tolkien to its more recent developments in Madeleine L'Engle and others, sketching along the way a good number of their works. Most of his readings are charitable, but the chapters remain perhaps too focused on just one theme per author. Because it is not an in-depth study, *Christian Mythmakers* is limited to reading Chesterton in terms of his enchantment of the everyday, Lewis in terms of *Sehnsucht*, and Williams in terms of spiritual power. Some readers may prefer a more exhaustive account of each. Literary critics could probably quibble with Hein's definition of myth, its function, and the extent to which the term can be applied to the authors under discussion. Readers unfamiliar with the writing introduced in *Christian Mythmakers* or those acquainted only with Lewis' more popular works, however, will doubtless have their interest deepened by this helpful introduction to literature surely deserving of attention, if not all of Hein's more enthusiastic praise.

— J. A. Hanson

THE NATURAL LAW: A STUDY IN LEGAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY. By HEINRICH A. ROMMEN. *Intercollegiate Studies Institute. 278 pp. $27 cloth, $8.50 paper.*

A new edition of a classic work, first published in 1947, now with a thorough and incisive introduction by Russell Hittinger. Rommen was a professional lawyer whose legal work, along with his support for Catholic social action, got him arrested by the Nazis. Hittinger notes that although *The Natural Law* is a highly sophisticated piece of scholarship on a notoriously complex topic, it is first and foremost a response to the political crisis brought about by the Third Reich: under a totalitarian "order," understanding the natural law takes on new urgency and importance. Rommen begins with a detailed history of the idea of natural law, tracing its permutations from Plato through positivism. In the book's second half he analyzes the idea itself, providing an explication that has few rivals for clarity and depth. Rommen's book continues to stand as a remarkable achievement and remains perhaps the best available introduction to the history and substance of the natural law.

ON CULTIVATING LIBERTY: REFLECTIONS ON MORAL ECOLOGY. By MICHAEL NOVAK. Edited by BRIAN C. ANDERSON. *Rowman & Littlefield. 359 pp. $27.95.*

This collection of Michael Novak's "best essays"—according to *City Journal*'s Brian Anderson, his former assistant—is a necessary resource for those interested in the mature thought of this important thinker. Novak defends the bourgeoisie, Reinhold Niebuhr, Whigs, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the Founders, and himself—the final essay, "Errands into the Wilderness," covers some of the same ground as the essay "Controversial Engagements" (FT, April) from an interestingly different angle.

HOLLYWOOD PARTY: HOW AMERICAN COMMUNISM SEDUCED THE AMERICAN FILM INDUSTRY IN THE 1930S AND 1940S. By KENNETH LLOYD BILLINGSLEY. *Prima. 365 pp. $25.*

In October 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) subpoenaed ten writers and directors—the "Hollywood Ten"—and asked them to name those who were collaborators or fellow travelers of the Communist Party of the United States of America. HUAC's action earned the eternal enmity of the entertainment establishment, ensuring that in Hollywood anti-communism would forever have a bad name. Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley has done yeoman work in documenting the extent of Soviet penetration into the movie business, first infiltrating the labor unions, then setting up "ventriloquist" front groups where non-Communists mouthed the Party line. This sometimes became tricky—the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, a 1930s front group whose board included Spencer Tracy, Lucille Ball, James Cagney, Groucho Marx, Henry Fonda, Burgess Meredith, and a host of others, had to recast itself overnight after the

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1939 Nazi-Soviet pact changed the Party line on Hitler (no easy feat in heavily Jewish Hollywood). Although Ronald Reagan—then still a liberal Democrat—staved off a Communist takeover of the Screen Actors' Guild, the Soviets had no shortage of other photogenic sympathizers over the years. Fifty years after the HUAC hearings, what we now call "the media" still pretends the charges were false; as this book proves, though, for many years, Stalinism was the stuff dreams were made of.

CHRISTIANITY AND AMERICAN FREEMASONRY. By WILLIAM WHALEN. *Ignatius. 213 pp. $14.95 paper.*

Although the Masonic order has been in decline since 1959, more than two million American men belong to it, making it the largest and oldest secret fraternal society. The present book makes a temperate and utterly convincing argument that Christianity and Freemasonry are incompatible. "The Great Architect of the Universe," says the author, is not the God whom Jesus taught us to call Our Father. Catholics are forbidden to be Masons, and many Protestants are embarrassed by the failure of their denominations to address the question candidly because, at least in part, there are Masons in positions of leadership. This irenic but uncompromisingly honest book could help remedy that problem.

ETHICA THOMISTICA: THE MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF THOMAS AQUINAS. Revised Edition. By RALPH MCINERNY. *Catholic University of America Press. 127 pp. $14.95.*

Ralph McInerny has completely revised this classic statement of Aquinas' moral philosophy, which is still the best short treatment available. Short here does not mean simplistic; many graduate students and full professors would do well to start where McInerny starts if they want to get Aquinas right about what it means for a person to act as a person should act. Over years of writing novels, McInerny has acquired the skill of writing accessibly, which means that this deep little book is also just right for the freshman or the diligent amateur—the "peeping Thomist"—who wants to get a handle on the Angelic Doctor's ethical thought.

THE AMERICAN LEADERSHIP TRADITION: MORAL VISION FROM WASHINGTON TO CLINTON. By MARVIN OLASKY. *Free Press. 298 pp. $25.*

Olasky is professor of journalism at the University of Texas, editor of the recently launched evangelical magazine, *World*, and has made very important contributions in rethinking welfare policy and what it means to be "compassionate" toward those in need. The present book is in part a jeremiad—an entirely warranted one—on what has happened to moral vision in America from Washington to Clinton, but also an insightful commentary on the inescapable connections between personal and public morality. John Adams and other Founders who spoke forcefully about this polity's dependence upon virtue would likely be much more alarmed by the story told by Olasky than are most Americans today. That, too, makes this book timely reading. Foreword by Charles Colson.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH: A BIBLIOGRAPHY. By AVERY DULLES and PATRICK GRANFIELD. *Paulist. 198 pp. $24.95 paper.*

Exactly what the title suggests, but what a splendid bibliography it is. Thoroughly international and ecumenical in their reach, the listings include virtually everything of note from the patristic era to the present, including prior bibliographies of works dealing with ecclesiology. An invaluable help for scholars and all who write on themes related to the doctrine of the Church.

THAT ALL MAY BE ONE: PERCEPTIONS AND MODELS OF ECUMENICITY. By HARDING MEYER. *Eerdmans. 176 pp. $18.*

A Lutheran theologian and veteran ecumenist analyzes the current doldrums of the ecumenical movement launched chiefly by Protestants in Edinburgh in 1910. The book is a useful survey of sundry proposals for somehow moving ahead toward the organic unity that Christ wills for his disciples. Chiefly of interest to students of ecumenism—where it has been and, just maybe, might go.

SAINTS AND SINNERS: A HISTORY OF THE POPES. By EAMON DUFFY. *Yale University Press. 336 pp. $37.50 cloth, $18.95 paper.*

Duffy's book "I can recommend with enthusiasm," wrote Thomas F. X. Noble in his review essay of six histories of the popes in our October 1998 issue. "Duffy resisted any temptation to trivialize his subject and produced the most level-headed single-volume history of the papacy" in English. Now out in paperback from Yale.

HOLOCAUST SCHOLARS WRITE TO THE VATICAN. Edited by HARRY JAMES CARGAS. *Greenwood. 176 pp. $49.95.*

Sixteen scholars, Christian and Jewish, who have written extensively on the Holocaust write "letters" to the Vatican suggesting what the Church should say about the Third Reich and the attempted extermination of Jewry. While the essays were written before the 1998 statement of the Holy See, "We Remember," they continue to be pertinent in their expression of Jewish dissatisfactions and hopes (shared by many Catholics) with respect to the Church coming to terms with a horror that enlisted too many collaborators and produced too few heroes.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

November 16

November 16 is the second big volume of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's historical epic *The Red Wheel,* recounting in relentless detail the events leading up to the Bolshevik takeover in 1917 (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1,014 pp., $35). It is a strange and engrossing work, written in a manner that many have compared to Tolstoy: stories within stories, huge chunks of raw material gleaned from the newspapers and agitprop pamphlets of the time, seemingly endless speeches by would-be rulers in the doomed Duma, and all against the background of a weak and ineffectual Tsar dominated by his wife and "our Friend," Rasputin, with Lenin seething and scheming in Switzerland, waiting for his time to come round at last. One reads *November 16* in the eerie awareness of what is to come, which makes all the more pitiful and ludicrous the liberal posturing of the politicians and the utopian dreams of the revolutionary terrorists, each of whom has a plan for using the bloody war with Germany to realize his ambitions.

There are moments of powerful insight and eloquence. For instance, Sanya, a second lieutenant at the front, challenges a chaplain on how he squares the madness of war with the command to love your neighbor. Father Severyan responds, "For a priest too, life as it is must be our field of action. . . . At no time has the world been without war. Not in seven or ten or twenty thousand years. Neither the wisest of leaders, nor the noblest of kings, nor yet the Church—none of them has been able to stop it. And don't succumb to the facile belief that wars will be stopped by hotheaded socialists. Or that rational and just wars can be sorted out from the rest. There will always be thousands of thousands to whom even such a war will be senseless and unjustified. Quite simply, no state can live without war, that is one of the state's essential functions. War is the price we pay for living in a state. . . . In ordinary life thousands of bad impulses, from a thousand foci of evil, move chaotically, randomly, against the vulnerable. The state is called upon to check these impulses—but it generates others of its own, still more powerful, and this time one-directional. At times it throws them all in a single direction—and that is war. So then, the dilemma of peace versus war is a superficial dilemma for superficial minds. 'We only have to stop making war and we shall have peace.' No! The Christian prayer says 'peace on earth and goodwill among men.' That is when true peace will arrive: when there is goodwill among men. Otherwise even without war men will go on strangling, poisoning, starving, stabbing, and burning each other, trampling each other underfoot and spitting in each other's faces. . . . War is not the vilest form of evil, not the most evil of evils. An unjust trial, for instance, that scalds the outraged heart, is viler. Or murder for gain, when the solitary murderer fully understands the implications of what he means to do and all that the victim will suffer at the moment of the crime. Or the ordeal at the hands of a torturer. When you can neither cry out nor fight back nor attempt to defend yourself. Or treachery on the part of someone you trusted. Or mistreatment of widows or orphans. All these things are spiritually dirtier and more terrible than war."

Such passages of spiritual and moral reflection are the exception in *November 16.* More typically it is a story of people confusedly crying out, fighting back, and attempting to defend themselves against circumstances they little understand. Most pathetic, and dangerous, are those who think they do understand and possess a remedy for what is going so ghastly wrong. The book includes subplots of love stories and conspiracies, along with interludes of a peasant life marked by a spiritual wisdom and uncomplicated human decency that the sophisticated have discarded with contempt. It is a tale of the brightest and the best hurling themselves and their world headlong toward the abyss of October 1917 in a social and political climate suffused with the suspicion that blind fate is in charge, and blind fate is not kindly disposed toward Russia or the world.

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Solzhenitsyn is one of the great figures of the century now coming to an end. His role is aptly described as prophetic. In *The Gulag Archipelago* and other writings he entrenched a standard by which even the most deluded of the deluded could no longer deny the evil of the evil empire. He sometimes took the West to task for its intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy, and was, in return, much castigated as a tiresome moralist and "Slavophile" by our intellectuals, who would have fit very well in the Duma of 1916. *November 16* is anything but a light read. It is frequently disjointed, forcing one to infer connections that are far from evident. To take it on is a project. The author gathers up all the people, causes, conflicts, confusions, hopes, and delusions of a few weeks of history and dumps them into the reader's lap. As though to say: "Here. You must think hard about this. This is the way it was just before the last time a great people went to hell."

FT

THE CLINTON ERA, AT HOME AND ABROAD

As of this writing, American soldiers have not been coming back in body bags, and therefore little attention is paid. But day by day one reads the dreary accounts of the continuing dismemberment of the former Yugoslavia. The U.S. is on the side of the Kosovars who want to break away from Serbia and establish an independent state. What are we doing there? The Kosovars are ethnic Albanians and mainly Muslim; the Serbs are Orthodox Christians. In Russia they ask why U.S. force is once again on the side of the Muslims against the Christians. Apparently it is not polite to ask that question here. Kosovo is the symbolic heartland of Serbia, and Serbs are not willing to surrender lands that have been their ancestral homes for many centuries.

At the conference table, Secretary Albright tells the Serb negotiators that they must agree to U.S. terms by two o'clock in the afternoon or we will bomb their homeland. What kind of negotiating ploy is this? Albright's supporters call for "sustained air strikes against the Serbian military infrastructure." That sounds neat, but in this kind of civil imbroglio lines between civilian and military are less than clear. Are we going to bomb nonmilitary targets and kill innocent civilians, or is it the case that no Serbs are innocent? If the Serbs are aggressing in Kosovo—which is not clear—the usual thing would be to send in troops to drive them out. But that would put U.S. soldiers at risk, which is unacceptable because it might raise domestic questions about our policy in the Balkans, if there is a policy. As the world's only superpower, we are beginning to look very much like a high-tech bully imposing our will on the cheap.

The piecemeal statements of the Administration lead some to conclude that the purpose of the exercise is to give NATO something to do, and to justify our massive military presence in Europe. But if the Albanian rebels have a moral right to Kosovo, maybe the large number of ethnic Albanians in neighboring Macedonia also have a right to a separate state. For that matter, a good many Albanians apparently want to overthrow the fragile government of Albania itself. Is it the strategic and moral purpose of the U.S. to assist unhappy ethnic groups to dismember sovereign states? If so, why not take up the cause of the Kurds? Their claims are more persuasive than those of the Kosovars. There are millions of Kurds in Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. After World War I the great powers promised them an independent state; in our unpleasantness with Iraq we encouraged them to rebel, and then betrayed them. Maybe we should commit ourselves to carving out a country for them, and start some more wars, providing target practice for our smart bombs.

One does not wish to sound cynical, but robust skepticism is in order. From Somalia to Haiti to Rwanda to Bosnia to Kosovo, this Administration has not communicated any believable policy or principle for the use of U.S. power. That is in addition to its apparent collusion in military-related trade with potential enemies such as China. A President who has been impeached and is now credibly accused of being, among other things, a rapist is in no position to engage the nation in a serious reflection about anything. As of this writing, most Americans seem not to be unduly bothered. Let the good times roll. I do not think this will last. The enormity of this President's corruption and crimes will finally sink in and trigger the long-delayed outrage—the absence of which to date has puzzled so many thoughtful people. But maybe not. Maybe the turning point will come with the arrival of the body bags from another misbegotten foreign venture. Or maybe we will simply muddle through the Clinton era, which our children will look back upon as a low, dishonest, and aberrant period in American life, unless theirs is lower, more dishonest, and no longer aberrant.

(Since the above was written a month ago, the U.S.-NATO forces have been bombing and bombing, with, despite the pleas of John Paul II and others, no surcease for the three most holy days of the Christian year. Remember Iraq and the keen sensitivity to Ramadan? But that's hardly the most important thing. The effect of the bombing to date is

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to give Milosevic cover in driving out the Kosovars, which is precisely what the bombing was supposed to prevent. So what is to be done now? Bounce the rubble of Belgrade, with massive civilian casualties? Withdraw under the guise of Milosevic having signed yet another peace agreement? That would be almost as humiliating for the U.S. as its embarking on this wrongheaded policy. Or, although everyone denies it, sending in ground forces? To do what? Bring hundreds of thousands of refugees back to their homes that have been destroyed during the bombing? To rebuild Kosovo and then continue to insist upon its independence? That's what started the fighting in the first place. It is said by some that the war aim must be the removal of Milosevic, as though that would remove six hundred years of the passionately conflicted history of Serbia and the Balkans. As things stand as of Easter Monday, one must reluctantly conclude that this action of the U.S. and NATO appears not to meet even one of the classical moral criteria for justified warfare except, just possibly, that it was undertaken by legitimate, although grievously misguided, authority.)

FT

THE EVANGELICAL MIND, AGAIN

The first thing to be said about the evangelical mind, wrote Mark Noll in his much discussed *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, "is that there is not much of an evangelical mind." In recent years, however, that has changed dramatically, according to James C. Turner, writing in the Catholic magazine *Commonweal*. He cites evangelical intellectuals such as George Marsden, Nathan Hatch, Nicholas Wolterstorff, Alvin Plantinga, Richard Mouw, and, of course, Mark Noll. Turner doesn't make a point of it, but a good deal of this evangelical ferment is happening at Notre Dame, where Turner is director of the Erasmus Institute. He does lift up the importance of *Books and Culture*, a fine publication that first appeared in 1995, and aims to be among evangelicals what the *New York Review of Books* is in the general culture. And he lifts up the singular role of Calvin College in gestating and nurturing an intellectual renascence in an evangelical world that has typically oscillated between cool and hostile toward the life of the mind.

Thinking about what is happening among evangelicals, Turner writes, "Roman Catholics of a certain age will be inclined to draw an analogy to the experience of American Catholic intellectuals in the wake of the Second Vatican Council." Maybe, although more recent studies tend to counter the stereotype of anti-intellectualism in the "ghetto of pre-Vatican II Catholicism." In thinking about the public order, notes Turner, Calvin College has drawn heavily on the legacy of the Dutch politician Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), but he agrees with Mark Noll's observation that recent evangelical political thinkers have also borrowed "from the Anabaptist heritage, from the mainline Protestantism of Reinhold Niebuhr, or from the neoconservative Catholicism of Richard John Neuhaus, Michael Novak, and George Weigel." Turner shares a widespread skepticism about whether the evangelical thinkers will make much of an impact on the large and multifarious worlds of evangelicalism, but of this he is more certain: "That [they have] made, and will continue to make, a substantial mark on American academic life seems indisputable, especially in history, philosophy, and, more recently, sociology. But the overall effect will likely be to fortify other, nonevangelical Christian approaches to scholarship, rather than to generate an original, distinctively evangelical life of the mind." And perhaps that is the way it should be.

Appearing about the same time as Turner's article is a cover story in *Christianity Today* celebrating "The New Theologians" (Kevin Vanhoozer, N. T. Wright, Richard Hays, Ellen Charry, Miroslav Volf). *CT* exults in the fact that such figures, who are not ashamed to be called evangelicals, are teaching at universities such as Yale and Duke where the liberals—in antithesis to whom evangelicals define themselves—once held undisputed sway. The *CT* message is, partly, that we now have some of "our" people planted behind the enemy lines and, partly, that a few members of the C team are playing with the A team. The distinctly defensive tone is perhaps to be expected in the mainline (if one may be permitted the term) publication of evangelicals who are self-consciously outsiders, in contrast to Turner's appreciation offered from a position of greater cultural confidence.

But, apart from a touch of hyperbole in both articles, they give reason to believe that the time is in sight when it will not be accurate to say that "there is not much of an evangelical mind." Then comes along evangelical sociologist James Davison Hunter of the University of Virginia to rain on the party. The question he has been asking in a number of scholarly books is: "Maybe so. But will they then still be evangelicals?" That's a subject for another day.

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EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT JUST FINE

Those were heady days, following the Second Vatican Council. Catholics had lived in a world apart, and suddenly everything was open to them. Prior to the Council, Catholic higher education had inculcated a powerful Catholic identity, steeped in what some called neo-Thomistic indoctrination. "What would fill that need now?" asks Neil Coughlan, who is reviewing in *Commonweal* James Burtchaell's *The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from Their Christian Churches* (Eerdmans). "We students and liberal faculty had our answers," Coughlan continues. "The pervasive 'Catholic atmosphere' of the colleges, the confidence of our march out of our precincts into American national life, these would foster Catholic faith and intellectualism as effectively as ever did a drilling in apologetics and the Catholic catechism. The world itself, we rather suddenly saw, was not an ungodly other—Christ's sacrifice had saved it, too. It was instinct with grace. *Incarnationalism, we called it. Manicheanism* was the philosophy of the ghetto. Everything would work out just fine."

But of course it didn't. Many Catholic colleges and universities lost their way, following the pattern so persuasively analyzed by Burtchaell. Coughlan's is a generally sympathetic review of *The Dying of the Light*, until he gets to the end, when he suddenly turns and attacks Burtchaell for being "coy" about what ought now to be done. He goes back to a two-part essay by Burtchaell in FIRST THINGS (April and May 1991) where he set forth a number of positive proposals that Coughlan does not like. Were Burtchaell's proposals followed, he suggests, Catholic schools would not be "centers of excellence" but "backwaters, curious reminders of a conservative critique of the 1990s American Catholic Church and of some aggressively secularizing forces in American society." Coughlan proposes present-day Notre Dame as the solution to the problems described by Burtchaell, and wonders what Burtchaell thinks of that institution where, he notes, Burtchaell once taught.

Burtchaell not only taught at Notre Dame, he was the Provost, and was considered by many to be the logical successor as president to Father Theodore Hesburgh. He knows Notre Dame well, and has been decorously silent about what he thinks of it. It is passing strange that anyone should think Burtchaell, who has given so many years in the service of academic excellence, is advocating a return to the "ghetto." What most particularly alarms Coughlan is Burtchaell's FIRST THINGS proposal that colleges and universities should be integrated into the life of the Church and share in its apostolic mission. That, of course, is also the proposal of the apostolic constitution on Catholic higher education, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (From the Heart of the Church), which Coughlan does not mention. To suggest that such a change would be a return to the ghetto is to say something not so much about higher education as about the Catholic Church. It at least edges up to the familiar and derisive claim that "Catholic university" is an oxymoron. After acknowledging the force of Burtchaell's diagnosis of the illness, Coughlan appears to draw back from the remedy, saying again as he reports he said so many years ago, "Everything will work out just fine."

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THE PERILS OF CIVILITY

I've spent a lot of energy over the years defending civility as a virtue. Mainly against people who think civility is a synonym for wimpishness. I'm therefore in principled sympathy with an initiative of the Chicago-based Park Ridge Center, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. The center brought together twenty-nine participants to discuss religion and public life, Martin E. Marty of the University of Chicago presiding. One stated purpose of the meeting was to advance the position that religion should not be excluded from the public square. They'll get no argument here. But then we come to what is meant by civility. The press release headlines: "Dogmatism or Discussion: Religious Groups Meet to Explore Framework for Civil Coexistence." Dogmatism or discussion? An alternative way of putting the matter is, Dogma or discussionism? And one might have thought that "coexistence" was put to rest when everybody finally agreed that the evil empire was evil after all.

The convenors should not be held responsible for press releases, but the press release does seem to reflect the event. The convenors are responsible, presumably, for the list of participants. If we measure left and right by support for or opposition to abortion and Bill Clinton, which is a reasonable measure in this case, twelve of the groups represented are very far left indeed—including Catholics for a Free Choice, Human Rights Campaign (a leading gay rights organization), People for the American Way, AIDS National Interfaith Network, and Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Four are identifiably conservative, meaning moderately to strongly right of center—Heritage Foundation, Ethics and Public Policy Center, Christian Coalition, and Family

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Research Council. The other groups are centrist, as in liberal. Four out of twenty-nine does give the edge to the dogma of discussionism, with liberal dogma redefined as discussion. This is civility as in "Everybody shut up except us!"

Not surprisingly, there was no common statement from the meeting, but Park Ridge has subsequently issued a handsomely printed booklet, "Religion and Public Discourse: Principles and Guidelines for Religious Participants." Among the principles and guidelines are these: "Welcome the diversity of beliefs and opinions," "Tell stories," "Act on the basis of relative and partial agreements," "Take steps to assure that the conversation moves beyond conflict or stalemate," "Recognize that religious traditions are multivocal," and so forth. There is much that is good and wise in the booklet but, all in all, it is the kind of thing that gives civility a bad name among people who care about truth. Professor Marty has correctly said that in our public discourse we should not have to choose between thugs and wimps. A caution is also in order about thugs disguised as wimps.

On some questions, to agree to disagree is to decide the disagreement. To agree to disagree on abortion, for instance, is to agree that people should be permitted to kill their children if they want to. Among the Park Ridge principles is this, "Recognize civil discourse as a process." Well, yes, but a process in the service of persuasion. Otherwise, civility is but liberal legerdemain for the sly stifling of those with whom you disagree. Chesterton said that the problem with a quarrel is that it interrupts a good—and, I would add, necessary—argument. The same might be said of civility as construed by the Park Ridge Center's "Religion and Public Discourse."

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STEERING BUT NOT ROWING

Back in 1975 when Peter Berger and I wrote *To Empower People*, the little book that is credited (or blamed) for launching the now widespread interest in the role of "mediating institutions" in civil society, we proposed a "minimal proposition" and a "maximal proposition." The minimal proposition is that government should get off the backs and out of the way of mediating institutions—family, church, voluntary associations, etc.—and let them do their vital work as they best know how. The maximal proposition is that, in some limited circumstances, government might use mediating institutions to achieve its public purposes. Peter and I were very cautious about the maximal proposition, warning that it could lead to state co-optation and weakening of mediating institutions. This continues to be a legitimate concern, and not only in the U.S.

The mediating institutions gospel has also gained adherents in Canada, and at an Ottawa meeting of the Canadian Centre of Philanthropy there was discussion of an announcement that provincial governments are preparing to "give" hundreds of millions of dollars to not-for-profit groups that address sundry social problems. Sonia Arrison, writing in the remarkable new Canadian paper, *National Post*, is more than a little skeptical. "It's at this point the dilemma for charities becomes clear, and in my opinion [one participant] was remarkably diplomatic. He said, 'the government still wants to *steer* the programs, but it doesn't want to *row*.' That is, officials want to control the programs, but they want some other group to deal with the messy details of delivering them on a low budget. This leaves charities in a position where governments are asking them to deliver programs the government will both completely finance *and direct*. Basically, charities are being asked to become government employees—albeit on a contractual basis. The government will come up with the programs, and the charities will do what they are told. Now, you might think this scenario would be revolting to most staff members of Canadian charities, but when I looked around at the faces in the room, it was clear some charitable groups are so desperate for funds they would prefer the problem of government control to the grind of fundraising. One woman even got up and expressed this sentiment."

Some charities may think the government link a great deal, but Ms. Arrison suggests they think again: "By accepting responsibility for a program dictated by government agencies, charities will slide down a slippery slope with the end result being they will be regarded as civil servants—not as part of a vibrant community that voluntarily strengthens civil society. This, in turn, will lead to a loss of donors and volunteers, the lifeblood of any charity. For who will volunteer to work for the government? And who will make a donation to a government program given we all pay into government programs and have witnessed their dismal results?"

Her conclusion is nothing if not definite: "It means they are no longer charities. If charities allow themselves to be used as 'extra civil servants' by governments, they will signal the death of their organizations, resulting in an unfortunate loss for many communities. My advice to charities looking for an easier route to increasing their funds would be to ask the government to reduce taxes so members of the communities in which these charities operate will have the disposable income to support them."

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Ms. Arrison may overstate the case against cooperation between charities and government, but the dangers are real. That is one reason why in education, for instance, vouchers are to be preferred to charter schools and other devices that invite extensive government regulation and co-optation. There is an old maxim that the Queen's command follows the Queen's pence. In this country, many religiously connected voluntary organizations are already questionably voluntary, so overwhelmingly dependent are they upon government funds. Catholic Charities USA and some overseas development groups are cases in point. Those who row must also have the main say in steering. Which means that maximal distance must be kept between the government that gives the dollar and the decision about how the dollar is used. Maximal distance is essential in guarding against the dangers of what, in 1975, we called the maximal proposition.

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POLES AND JEWS

Some years ago, when the question of religious symbols at Auschwitz had flared once again, an Israeli Prime Minister remarked that Poles "imbibed anti-Semitism with their mothers' milk." That was deeply and understandably resented by the people of Poland, yet the resentment was joined to an acknowledgment that the charge was not without some basis in reality. Now a large (365 pages) special issue of the journal *Wiez* (which means "Bond") has collected articles that have appeared in its pages over the last several decades. The collection is titled "Under One Heaven: Poles and Jews." In a 1988 essay, written before the final liberation from communism, Krystyna Kersten and Jerzy Szapiro reflect on some of the complexities of a tortured relationship.

> We must remember that the Polish memory after the war was dominated by an awareness of Polish sacrifices and the dramatic history of the resistance movement. These memories were uncomfortably disturbed by recollections of the general role of passive witnesses to the Shoah. These troubled feelings were often vented in the evocation of the myth of the Jews as bearers of evil—a myth that had inhered in the Christian tradition and had later been grafted onto the ideology of nationalist extremism. During the war, this myth fed on all available arguments, true or confabulated, such as reports about the behavior of national minorities, including the Jews, to the east of the Bug in 1939-1941. After the war, the myth was nourished by the distinctly visible presence of Jews among the authorities, and especially in the security apparatus, or even among the people who supported or accepted painlessly the order imposed by the Communists. The social image of the Jews as internal enemies was therefore strengthened. Now, they appeared in the role of Communist persecutors of the Polish nation—all the more dangerous because they wrapped themselves in Polish national costume.
>
> The time would come when the authorities would be so anxious to utilize social sentiments to lubricate the acceptance of a series of political U-turns that they would turn anti-Semitic prejudices against people of Jewish origin, first within the power structure itself, and later, for many years, against the opposition. The problem of anti-Semitism is given a concrete historical dimension when we remember that its dynamics and context after 1945 were determined to a large degree by the conflicts between the authorities and the Polish populace. This reminds us that the so-called Jewish question in Poland is also a Polish question. It was precisely this political context that exacerbated the vicious circle of mutual prejudices from which many Poles and many Polish Jews never managed to free themselves.

(The special issue of *Wiez* is available for $14 from P.O. Box 209, PL 00-950, Warszawa, Poland.)

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FREEDOM, LICENSE, AND THE TRUTH

A teacher of religion at a Baptist college was denied tenure and effectively fired. The stated reason was that she denied the inspiration of Scripture and cast doubt on the divinity on Christ. "Of course it violates academic freedom," she writes to a friend. "Yes, I read the articles you mention in FIRST THINGS, and the distinction between 'freedom' and 'license' sounds good, but it finally doesn't work. It's fine to say that freedom is not the freedom to do what you want but the freedom to do what you ought, but who is to say what you ought to do? That's my decision and my decision alone. Academic freedom means saying what you want to say and teaching what you want to teach. I have no objection if you want to call that academic license." It is a view frequently encountered in all our church-related

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colleges and universities.

Father Charles Curran writes the long entry on "academic freedom" in Richard McBrien's *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*. Curran is a dissident Catholic moral theologian who was effectively checked by Cardinal James Hickey of Washington when he tried to impose his understanding of academic freedom on Catholic University. He now teaches at Southern Methodist University. Of the 1990 apostolic constitution, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, Curran writes: "The document theoretically limits academic freedom by truth and the common good, sees local bishops not as external to the college or university but as participants in the institution, and includes canonical provisions for those who teach theology in Catholic higher education." That first formulation is of particular interest: that academic freedom is limited by truth and the common good. What is the alternative: Academic freedom means the freedom to be indifferent to truth and the common good?

Fr. Curran, like our Baptist friend, would likely deny that, claiming that the question is, Who determines what is the truth and the common good? That way of putting the question is very close to Pilate's "What is truth?" The fact is that Christian schools are established on the premise that the truth is knowable and known—not completely or exhaustively, of course, but insofar as reason is able to discern and God has revealed. Is an institution that says Jesus Christ is the truth less free than an institution that denies, implicitly or explicitly, that any such absolute truth can be known? It depends, it would seem, on whether or not Jesus Christ is the truth. That is the critical distinction between license and freedom. The truth can limit license but it cannot limit freedom. Those who say that the distinction between license and freedom is a distinction without a difference have, in fact, chosen in favor of license.

By their reasoning, the discernment of the truth on which the Christian community established the university in question is trumped by presumably superior criteria of truth, discerned individually. Nobody should deny that the administration of such an institution can be bigoted, narrow-minded, and arrogant in imposing, in the name of Christian truth, truths that are not entailed by Christian truth. Church-related schools, it should be noted, have no monopoly on bigotry, narrow-mindedness, and arrogance. But when this happens in a Christian institution, the argument should be not about "academic freedom" but about the truth. When it is asserted that academic freedom can be limited by the truth, we are no longer talking about freedom but about license.

A teacher may honestly reach a point at which he can no longer subscribe to the truth claims on which the institution is founded. He may even believe he is compelled to oppose those truth claims. Obviously, he is then in an awkward relationship with the institution, and there are a number of ways that can be handled. The one thing he cannot honestly do is to assert that academic freedom requires the institution to abandon its purpose in order to accommodate his loss of faith. That, if they would only listen to themselves more carefully, is what some advocates of academic freedom are asserting in current debates about Christian higher education.

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Ex-Friends Among Friends

"He is being not only lionized but loved," I observed in introducing Norman Podhoretz at the Harvard Club to a packed house gathered to celebrate his book, *Ex-Friends*. As an old friend who hopes never to be an ex-friend, I reminded him of the warning of a first-century Jewish teacher, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you." It has not quite come to that yet, but the master of hackle-raisers who edited *Commentary* for thirty-five years and earned the middle name of "Controversial" with books such as *Making It*, *Why We Were in Vietnam*, and *Breaking Ranks* has been receiving rave reviews, also from unlikely sources. As I said at the Harvard lunch, *Ex-Friends* is the story of intellectual friendship and combat that has indelibly marked the culture of which we are all part, and I warmly recommend it. It is also a great read. In a favorable notice in the *New York Times Book Review*, Richard Brookhiser of *National Review* has a couple of caveats about Podhoretz's version of the Family—the group of New York intellectuals who are Podhoretz's "ex-friends," including Allen Ginsberg, Lionel and Diana Trilling, Lillian Hellman, Hannah Arendt, and Norman Mailer.

Brookhiser writes: "The general failing of Podhoretz's ex-friends, and of most of the Family, was pride. Sensibility and brains, they believed, gave them access to a realm of arcane and specialized perceptions, which their fellow citizens were too obtuse to share or appreciate. Because they understood Karl Marx and T. S. Eliot and jazz, they were above the common herd. Podhoretz has his own twinges of pride: he writes as if the neoconservatives, those Family members who reacted to the late '60s by moving right rather than left, supplied Ronald Reagan with everything he needed to think about communism, although Reagan often said that the writer who most

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influenced him was Whittaker Chambers."

Rick Brookhiser, also a friend, touches upon a delicate nerve. It is not that Podhoretz has twinges of pride, which he would not deny, nor that intellectuals tend to be elitist in the pejorative sense of that term, which nobody can deny. It is, rather, the rivalry between old conservatives, represented by *National Review*, and neoconservatives represented by, inter alia, *Commentary*. The rivalry, when it was such, was a remarkably friendly rivalry. Today, when conservative and neoconservative is a distinction without a practical difference, Brookhiser suggests that it should not be forgotten when it comes to telling the history of the conservative ascendancy. "Some of us," he is saying, "were right from the start." And he is right about that, too. Whittaker Chambers, whose *Witness* is one of the great autobiographies of the century, was, in the eyes of the Family, beyond the pale. Yet a case could be made that he, along with James Burnham and others, was among the first neoconservatives—meaning thinkers of the left who were, in Irving Kristol's happy phrase, mugged by reality. All were given shelter at *National Review* by Brookhiser's mentor Bill Buckley long before Podhoretz broke ranks. All that is true enough.

In my left desk drawer is a book of matches distributed by *National Review* some years ago. It bears a photo of President Reagan reading *NR* on Air Force One, and underneath the caption, "I got my job through *National Review*." That, too, is true. It is hard to imagine the election of Reagan without a conservative movement that is hard to imagine without *National Review*. I believe it was at the big fortieth anniversary bash that columnist George Will asserted that *National Review* is, quite simply, the most influential magazine ever published. A case can be made for that. While Reagan got his job through *NR*, he did his job with the additional and indispensable help of the neocons surrounding publications such as *Commentary* and the *Public Interest*. There is enough credit to be generously shared, and, in fact, it generally is shared generously. In any event, *Ex-Friends* is autobiographical, and it is in the nature of autobiography that you tell the piece of the story that is yours, which need not fit neatly the pieces belonging to others.

I have somewhat less sympathy for Brookhiser's second caveat. In the book Podhoretz says that his life, and maybe the life of the country, is the poorer for not having such an intense community of intellectual exchange as the Family, "a center around which we can gather and in which, whether through collaboration or competition, agreement or dissension, we can deepen and refine our thinking." Brookhiser comments: "Is this true? Podhoretz does not make the case. Most of the Family members were critics, not creators; the currents of political and artistic life flowed around them, not through them, and to the extent they made a contribution, Podhoretz often believes (as in the cases of Ginsberg and Mailer) that it was pernicious." Is that true? While the around-not-through bit is nicely put, it implies a dubious antithesis between the critical and creative. Lionel Trilling's reflections on "the liberal imagination" told us much about how we live and think about how we live, while Arendt on the origins of totalitarianism made sense of a Cold War that held the world in thrall for almost half a century. They were arguments that resulted in sensibilities and ways of thinking that were not there before the arguments were made, and that, it seems to me, counts as creativity.

Many currents flow into what is today's conservatism. One is marked by the signposts of Taft-Buckley-Goldwater-Reagan. Another, called neoconservatism until it merged with the mainstream, had its source in the Old Left of the 1930s, where left and right were defined by what kind of Marxist you were. Some of us who are now called conservatives were not part of either. Living in New York, I was keenly aware of both. When I broke ranks with the left in the early '70s, I began to write regularly for both *National Review* and *Commentary*. Writing for *National Review* had the feel of consorting with the right; writing for *Commentary* had the feel of—if I may be permitted the academic jargon—problematizing the left. But that was a long time ago. In 1989, when I was rudely ejected from my misalliance with another current of conservatism represented by the Rockford Institute, the support of both *National Review* and *Commentary* was immediate and unqualified. More recently, in 1996 when this journal pointedly addressed judicial usurpation in a way that raised the question of the legitimacy of the political order as it presently functions, *Commentary* reacted with alarm to the suggestion that all polities and parties are subject to transcendent moral judgment. "I didn't become a conservative," Norman Podhoretz wrote in distancing himself from our heresy, "in order to be a radical." But we did not become ex-friends.

Factional gyrations and clashes across the ideological spectrum will likely continue to the end of time. *Ex-Friends* brilliantly, and sometimes poignantly, captures a moment that cannot be again but has importantly influenced this moment and others still to be. It was a very New York moment and a very Jewish moment, and is not of least significance because for the first time a New York Jewish moment played a large part in redefining America's intellectual culture. America, it has been observed, is so large and so various that almost any generalization made about it is amply supported by the evidence. It is a nation of many currents—political, intellectual, artistic. Some of the currents

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of greatest interest flowed through, not around, the world described by Norman Podhoretz in *Ex-Friends*. I think I already mentioned that it is also a great read.

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The Death of a Pioneer

Oscar Cullman has died, at age ninety-six at his home in Chamonix, France. That the name is not more widely known today is a pity. A Lutheran, he was one of the great New Testament scholars and ecumenical spirits of the century. He held a number of professorships, chiefly at the University of Basel and University of Paris, and was an ecumenical observer at all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council. Long before and after Giovanni Battista Martini became Pope Paul VI, he and Cullman were in intense and sympathetic conversation. I suppose that, were I to name one book that launched me into serious concern about church-state relations, it would be Cullman's splendid little book of 1956, *The State in the New Testament*.

In the late 1980s, shortly before I entered into full communion with the Catholic Church, Professor Cullman and I had an exchange on his views regarding the future of ecumenism as "communion in diversity." Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and others were and are much taken with Cullman's argument that the confessional divisions of the sixteenth century are the work of God's "left hand," and the resulting differences must somehow be given the opportunity to play themselves out rather than being "negotiated away" in ecumenical dialogue. It is a subtle argument, and Cullman was unhappy when I wrote in an article that it reflected a certain ecumenical "disillusionment." In July 1989, he wrote me: "But of course I am of the opinion that the origin and existence of the various confessions is not only a misfortune, that it is not only 'division' and destruction of unity, but that it also signifies a working toward the good in the divine plan for unity and that in diversification the Holy Spirit is aiming at unity in accordance with the New Testament. . . . No! It does not arise out of disillusionment, but rather out of a deep belief and hope in ecumenism which has not let me go for the past sixty years. Disillusionment arises rather from a false ecumenism which I fight against."

Oscar Cullman was engaged in ecumenical dialogue with Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians decades before the term "ecumenical dialogue" came into fashion, and he was much later to turn away from what he thought that fashion had become. He protested my saying he was disillusioned, but he did begin to speak of the actualization of Christian unity in more eschatological tones. Then and now a problem with his idea that the confessional differences could, in the mysterious workings of God's left hand, be instrumental to unity is that today's heirs of the confessions coming out of the sixteenth-century division, notably Lutheranism and Calvinism, are not very confessional or, if confessional, not very interested in unity. In Europe, the United States, and elsewhere, it seems the Protestant confessions have played themselves out, although not in the way that Cullman hoped.

If, however, full communion is Christ's will for his Church, and it surely is, then Oscar Cullman was certainly right to emphasize that it will be achieved by Him and not by our ecumenical schemes. Christian unity is his work before it is ours, which, of course, is all the more reason to make it ours. Thinking about these and many other questions, I have the sense that the community of reflection is now diminished by the absence of Oscar Cullman. But then I think again and recognize that, in the fuller communion he now enjoys, please God, he is more present to us than ever before. *Requiescat in pace.*

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While We're At It

■ Professor Russell Hittinger of the University of Tulsa, a regular and valued participant in our eminently urbane New York colloquia, keeps telling me that Oklahoma is a very different world—not a lesser world, mind you, but very different. He regularly sends along items to illustrate his point. For instance, a bunch of stories from the *Tulsa World* showing how great questions of constitutional right and natural law are engaged in the political discourse of Oklahoma. That great state is one of only three that permits cockfighting. A game-fowl breeder opines that it is "probably the cockfighting capital of the world," a touch of chauvinism that manages to overlook Mexico and points south. In any event, and as you might imagine, even in Oklahoma there are damnliberals (one word) trying to impose their prissy dogmas on others. When they tried to do that back in 1975, Representative John Monks of Muskogee memorably rose to the defense, hailing the great tradition of cockfighting as "the sport of all free countries." Lifting up an aspect of the evil empire that had escaped general notice, he pointed out that

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"In every country the Communists have taken over, the first thing they do is outlaw cockfighting." Well, maybe not the very first thing, but the assertion does remind us how useful communism was for sundry political purposes. The paper reports that supporters in the House chambers punctuated Mr. Monks' speech by waving American flags and playing recordings of crowing roosters. In the current rematch on the issue, breeder Sharon McFarland said there are about fifty permanent cockpits in Oklahoma, run mainly by rural folk who (and here, perhaps inadvertently, she echoes the great Justice Brandeis) "just want to be left alone." Joe Berry—that's the one who, the paper helpfully points out, is the state poultry specialist over at the university—invokes something like natural law. "Most of it is their nature," he says. "A rooster wants to establish dominance by fighting or intimidating other roosters to the point they go hide." Darwin is brought in for the defense as it is argued that the natural way of roosters assures that the genes of the strongest are passed on, producing a stronger generation of chickens. My understanding is that in the cockfight the roosters fight to the very bloody death, thus precluding that benign outcome, but perhaps I quibble. Says the McFarland woman, "I like these birds because they have the same attitude as me. Don't tell me 'no.' It makes me madder-'n-hell. They're independent. Proud. The bird has one goal in mind, to win or die trying." Says another breeder in support, "You're looking for that rooster that will never, never give up." While I gather he is not taking sides in the current debate, Prof. Hittinger, keen constitutional historian that he is, apparently discerns in the anti-ban rhetoric sentiments reminiscent of the American founding. "Don't tread on me" and all that. Whatever one thinks of cockfighting, the suggestion is that a spirit is alive and well in Oklahoma that is largely dead in other parts of the country that are inclined to look down on the likes of Representative Martin Odom of Hitchita who says a ban on cockfighting could lead to outlawing "the rifle for hunting, the hook for fishing, the rope for rodeo calves, and the spurs on cowboys." There's that discredited slippery slope again.

■ There are feminists who would have you believe that the defense of woman and the defense of "reproductive rights" are inseparable. As there are feminists who insist that to defend woman is to defend what makes her most singularly a woman—the ability to give birth to new life. Mary McAleese is pro-woman, a pro-life feminist, and she is also the President of the Republic of Ireland. She is one among many pro-life feminists whom she describes as "strident full-volume voices insisting on their intrinsic moral, human right to speak and be heard without seeking permission." She anticipates "a day coming when we will hear the voice from within the womb, when its own authentic pain will be undeniable, when we will know with certainty that it is saying, 'I want to live. I have a right to live. I do not need your permission to live.'" She and her sisters in the fight are celebrated in the winter issue of the *American Feminist*, the publication of Feminists for Life of America, whose mission is to advocate a more truthful feminism. To subscribe or for more information, write to FFLA, 733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20005, or see their website at www.serve.com/fem4life.

■ A survey of 2,200 Lutherans sponsored by Lutheran Brotherhood, a fraternal insurance organization, indicates, once again, a tenuous connection between Lutheranism's constituting doctrine—justification by faith alone—and the reality that is Lutheranism. Forty-eight percent of Lutherans "agree" or "probably agree" that "people can only be justified before God by loving others," and 60 percent agree that "the main emphasis of the gospel is God's rules for right living." Some Lutheran theologians contend that the reason for the Lutheran communion's continuing separation from Rome is to maintain the teaching of justification by faith, "the doctrine by which the church stands or falls." One might suggest that the Lutheran communion continues chiefly for the maintenance of theologians who say that—probably a minority of Lutheran theologians today. One might suggest that, but I wouldn't. I hardly allow myself to even think it.

■ The surprising thing about Michael Aeschliman's *The Restitution of Man: C. S. Lewis and the Case Against Scientism* —now out in a new edition (Eerdmans, $12 paper)—is that it was first published in 1983. Anticipating much of the current controversy over the worship of technological progress that has characterized the end of the twentieth century, sixteen years later this book is still squarely in the middle of the debate. And fear not, it is not just another Lewis panegyric. Aeschliman neatly draws together the anti-scientistic thought of numerous others in the rational theistic tradition to produce a compelling argument for, in Lewis' terminology, the Tao.

■ "I am convinced of the conclusion, but I have the durndest time explaining to others how I get there, except by simply citing religious proscriptions." The conclusion referred to is that there is something deeply wrong about homosexuality, and the speaker is a very sophisticated intellectual. His problem is hardly unusual. Social convention, religious teaching, and personal repulsion have for centuries made it seem self-evident that homosexuality is deeply wrong. Consider how rapid has been the change. Thirty or more years ago, a professor who

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publicly announced that he thinks homosexual relations are dandy would have been viewed as a very suspect character. He might even have been brought up on morals charges, and not just in church-related schools. On most campuses today, a professor who announces publicly that he has serious moral problems with homosexuality is likely to be in career-threatening trouble. One measure of a culture's vitality is the number of moral truths that can be taken for granted, that do not need to be explicitly argued, that are not up for grabs. Not for nothing, therefore, do so many think our culture is on the critical list. To help people make the case for a sound conclusion that has been clouded by passionate obfuscation, I recommend Stanley Grenz's new book, *Welcoming but not Affirming: An Evangelical Response to Homosexuality* (Westminster/John Knox, 210 pp., $18 paper). It is a thoroughly ecumenical and theologically informed account of a question that is throwing many churches and families into turmoil. Controversies surrounding homosexuality will undoubtedly continue, but this book leads the reader through controversy to understanding.

■ The splendid recordings of the Bach Collegium Japan occasioned my remarks (November 1998) on the sacramental potency of Bach's music and how it is that, if you play around with the aesthetics long enough, grace may take hold. The following report comes from Father Vincent Capuano, S.J., of Granada, Spain: "This inspired me to report that a fellow Jesuit who is Japanese told me that the music of Bach was part of his conversion experience. He said that he was a typical atheistic child of a typical atheistic family because most modern Japanese do not practice their ancient religions. Nonetheless he was sent to the Christian Brother's school because of its academic reputation. He is a pianist, and as a boy took a liking to Bach. When he asked his teacher how he could learn more about the master of the fugue, the teacher told him that one cannot understand Bach without coming to terms with Christianity. So he began to study and read about this odd religion that believes in a crucified God. He read about St. Francis Xavier and the early missionaries. He read too of Paul Miki and the hundreds of Japanese martyrs who witnessed to the Faith. He enrolled in the Jesuit-run Sophia University in Tokyo, and eventually converted to Catholicism. After working for a steel company for several years he entered the Society of Jesus and last year was ordained a priest. His parents have also converted." As the great Johann Sebastian wrote on every manuscript, *Soli Deo Gloria.*

■ *The Kissinger Transcripts*, just out from New Press, provide insights on Kissinger's and Nixon's secret meetings with, among others, Chairman Mao. At Mao's residence on February 21, 1972, Kissinger engages in diplomatic flattery, telling Mao that he assigned his writings in his Harvard classes. Mao responds, "Those writings of mine aren't anything. There is nothing instructive in what I wrote." Nixon protests, "The Chairman's writings moved a nation and have changed the world." No, says Mao, "I haven't been able to change it. I've only been able to change a few places in the vicinity of Beijing." Mao talks about his impending death. "Anyway, God has sent me an invitation." In a 1975 meeting, Mao expands on that. "I am going to Heaven soon. And when I see God, I'll tell him it's better to have Taiwan under the care of the United States now." Kissinger says he is astonished to hear him say that. "No," answers Mao, "because God blesses you, not us. God does not like us because I am a militant warlord, also a Communist. That's why he doesn't like me. He likes you." Kissinger, apparently embarrassed by this turn in the conversation, says, "I've never had the pleasure of meeting him, so I don't know." Astonishment is in order.

■ We like it when anyone sticks up for boys, and we like it especially when the sticking up for them is done by Midge Decter. She writes: "Boys must always find some means to measure themselves, and the reason they must do so is that they are by nature pure of heart. By this I do not mean to suggest that they are not dirty, noisy, disruptive, and even violent. . . . But whether they are naughty or nice, troubled or troubling, what seems to be given to them along with their testosterone is an enormous degree of transparency. Anyone who has ever watched little boys at play knows that whatever they are up to, for good or ill, their hearts are always on their sleeves. Little girls acquire wiles practically with their first step. They flirt, they pout, they manipulate. Watch a group of them at play, and what will be going on beneath their games is an instinctive feel for tactics and strategy worthy of the world's most practiced diplomats. Boys, by contrast, have no wiles. As the years go on, life will teach them not to cry when they want to, and to cover up their fear. But little boys almost never dissemble or manipulate—even their lies are transparent." As an expert on the subject, having been one myself, I can attest to the truth of Ms. Decter's description. Although I didn't know then that my lies were so transparent.

■ Some three dozen contributors tell what it was like to be reared as children of Communist parents in *Red Diapers: Growing Up in the Communist Left* (University of Illinois Press). The stories set in the thirties and forties—long before the McCarthy era that is supposed to justify so much that Communists did—depict lives of secrecy, deception, hatred of America, and adulation of Stalin. Stephen Schwartz, himself a red diaper baby, says the book has "the flavor of a wistful defense of what was, in the end, an

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atrocity." "In American Communist families, children were brainwashed, lured away from their natural, native loyalties to serve one of history's cruelest tyrannies. Such abuse cannot be easily pardoned." Reviewing the same book, Ronald Radosh writes: "Ignoring much of the evidence they have themselves assembled in *Red Diapers*, the editors show that they are true to the CP tradition in which they grew up—there is a right line, and even those who have become slightly critical and disillusioned must keep their eye on the real enemy of the people—which is anyone who believes the future is not something called socialism." Pink diaper babies, on the other hand, are muted in their praise of socialism but sure that the future is not capitalism. Which, in a world where the only real debate is over what kind of capitalism should be favored, leaves them in a position as marginal as that of their red diaper cousins.

■ You have seen the ads for *Touchstone* in these pages. Of course we don't endorse everything that is advertised here. Last issue there was one for a conference featuring Bishop John Shelby Spong of the Episcopal Church who is, I'm afraid, pathetically apostate in a manner that tries but fails to reach the gravity of heresy. But *Touchstone* is something else. Edited by a bevy of mainly younger Protestants, Orthodox, and Roman Catholics, it advances an ecumenism of orthodoxy defined by the Great Tradition. In January, the magazine sponsored a small gathering on "plausible ecumenism" at the Yale Club of New York, in which I was pleased to participate. I confess there is a part of me that gets impatient with these discussions. For many years as a Lutheran pastor, I made the case for "evangelical catholicity" apart from full communion with the Catholic Church, and all the changes on that theme seem wearily familiar. I do believe that Orthodoxy and Catholicism are the live options for "ecclesial Christians," by which I mean Christians for whom the act of faith in Christ and the act of faith in his Church is, finally, not two acts of faith but one act of faith. And, of course, becoming Orthodox does not resolve the problem of not being in communion with the Petrine Ministry instituted by Christ and inevitably exercised by the Bishop of Rome. That being said, however, it is a rock-bottom article of Catholic orthodoxy that people must act according to the dictates of conscience, always praying and thinking toward a conscience rightly formed. The *Touchstone* people are bracingly conscientious and determined to follow where the Spirit leads. The Protestants among them—Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, and other—are disposed to think that they are not just walking a well-worn path toward a foregone ecclesial conclusion, and they may well be right. The unity for which we together pray will be the work of the Holy Spirit, and not of our own contrivance. In Catholic teaching, these are brothers and sisters who are already in "true but imperfect communion" with the Catholic Church. For most Christians who are not in full communion, the fulfillment of that communion will happen in ways that will likely surprise us all, and will certainly be attended by unanticipated developments also within the Catholic Church. Meanwhile, there is much work to be done together in bearing witness to the vibrant orthodoxy of the faith we now share. If these are among the concerns that command your attention, I suggest you take a look at *Touchstone*.

■ Most Americans think that there is a "gay community." There isn't. Homosexuals are a surprisingly heterogenous group, fractured into manifold warring factions over religion and politics, the uses of science, and the various vagaries of sexual expression, including transgender and other rarefied permutations thereof. One of the more Amazonian speakers for this uncommunal community is Camille Paglia, a maverick scholar and writer best known for her blunt opinions and explosive prose. Not untouched by what seems to be a curious animus for those whom she purports to represent, Paglia has some hard words for fellow gays who rail against the alleged oppressiveness of Christianity. "As a scholar," she writes, "I am troubled by the provincialism and amorality of the gay male world, when compared to the vastness of philosophical perspective provided by orthodox religion—or even by ancient paganism, which honored nature. And as a lesbian, I'm sick and tired of the gay rights movement being damaged by the cowardly incapacity for self-examination of many gay men. . . . I have been struck, in my brief encounters over the years with a half-dozen prominent gay male activists, by the frightening coldness and deadness of their eyes. Behind their smooth, bland faces I saw the seething hatreds of Dostoevskian anarchists. Gay crusading, I concluded, was their way of handling their own bitter misanthropy, which came from other sources. I found these men more spiritually twisted than anyone I have encountered in my life. The gay movement should not be left in their hands." While not proposing Paglia as a moral exemplar, and while wondering whether the movement can be separated from the fanaticism she deplores, the reproach of the Christian-bashing endemic to much gay advocacy is welcome.

■ Perry Robinson, an alert reader in Fullerton, California, notes that the PBS show *Religion and Ethics*, which is advertised in these pages, is broadcast there at ten o'clock Sunday morning. That is a time when, he suggests, those most likely to be interested are doing something more important

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than watching television. He wonders if the station is trying to guarantee the program's failure. A different, although no more heartening, explanation is that the station sees the program as filler for a television "dead time." That was the case with the "Sunday morning ghetto" back in the days when the FCC required a quota of uplift broadcasting. Quality programming relative to religion sometimes seems to be a lost cause. One does not want to discourage those who keep trying, but I'm inclined to the view that the best advice is to turn the thing off. I have a grudging respect for those who announce that they don't even have a set in the house—grudging, because they usually sound so smug about it.

■ The retraction, so to speak, is a few inches way down at the bottom of page twenty-two: "Gay Marine in *Times* Acted in Smut Films." The story goes this way. Some months ago the *New York Times Magazine* ran this long advocacy article, "The Shadow Life of a Gay Marine," profiling the unhappy circumstance of a persecuted Marine officer, identified only by his first initial, R, who had to live a pitifully furtive existence under the "don't ask, don't tell" rule of the U.S. military. A few months later, the *Advocate*, a gay magazine in New York, reported that his name is Rich Merritt, that he appeared in several homosexual pornographic films while on active duty, and that he had subsequently received an honorable discharge from the Marines. About the disclosure, Adam Moss, editor of the *Times Magazine* said: "Would we have liked to have known? Of course. But this is a story about the complications of living under 'don't ask, don't tell,' and this revelation doesn't alter the story's truths." Yes, the officer's life was flagrant rather than furtive, but the story did get some things right. For instance, his first initial is R. As for not knowing that he was acting in pornographic films while on active duty, it appears the *Times* has a new rule for its reporters: Don't ask, don't tell.

■ Talk about forming "common ground" between pro-life and pro-choice forces usually, and understandably, meets with intense suspicion. "How could we possibly cooperate with *them*?" is the question raised by both sides. The pro-abortionists claim, hyperbolically, that their opponents are the enemies of women and everything good and progressive. The anti-abortionists note, with the sobriety that attends the undeniable, that their opponents support the killing of children. Yet when New Jersey, and later the federal government, proposed a "cap" on welfare payments that would almost certainly have the effect of encouraging pregnant welfare mothers to abort their children rather than give them birth, an unlikely alliance—including Right to Life, the state Catholic conference, ACLU, and NOW—was formed. James R. Kelley, a sociologist at Fordham University, thinks this is a limited common ground that should be cultivated: "Pro-choice idealists should more explicitly differentiate themselves from their false friends in the population-control establishment. This will not be easy. The first known call for legalized abortion was made in 1915 in a publication of the Malthusian League that held that overpopulation was the chief cause of poverty. The initial argument offered in Congress (June 24, 1976) against the Hyde amendment restricting Medicaid funding of abortion was that these restrictions would cost taxpayers annually between $450 million and $565 million for the care of children born because their mothers could not afford an abortion. Finally, movement integrity requires that pro-choice idealists renounce the polemic that grassroots pro-life activists lose interest in both child and mother after birth. Renouncing this fund-raising stereotype might prove to be the hardest of all. Diminishing state support for poor women, rationalized by a moralistic language of self-reliance, constitutes the most severe kind of challenge to the integrity of both movements. On the right to life side, it directly calls into question its tactical political alliance with fiscal conservatives. On the pro-choice side, the data expose the inadequacy of viewing abortion simply as a liberating right and demonstrate the need to align, in a common-ground way, abortion rights with substantive traditions about the common good that traditionally include the dignity of human life at each of its stages. I understand the complications and the difficulties involved in that sentence. There are powerful psychological, moral, and historical impediments internal to both movements that make any common ground difficult to imagine specifically, much less to achieve. But the stakes are high. How New Jersey pro-life and pro-choice activists expand or narrow the common ground they have just barely begun in contesting the New Jersey family cap is an important chapter in an unfinished story. It is a story of how America thinks not only about abortion but about poverty, its causes, and our responsibilities—in other words, about the long-term prospects for our human solidarity."

■ Psychiatrist Paul R. McHugh exposes in "Dying Made Easy" the medical fraud and human cruelty of Dr. Kevorkian's supposed "assistance" to people in dire straits. He contrasts Kevorkian's way with that described in the recent best-selling book by Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, about a patient dying of Lou Gehrig's disease. Yet McHugh is also worried about the light, bantering, tone of the book, filled with one-liners and unexamined platitudes. He notes that Albom, a prize-winning sports writer, tellingly misquotes Gehrig's farewell speech at Yankee Stadium on July 4, 1939. Gehrig said: "Today I consider myself the luckiest man on the

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face of the earth." Albom has it: "Today I *feel* like the luckiest man on the face of the earth" (emphasis added). "This little slip," says McHugh, "is of the essence of the solipsism that infects *Tuesdays with Morrie*." McHugh concludes: "To the proponents of euthanasia and assisted suicide, the attitudes expressed in *Tuesdays with Morrie* offer no prescriptive resistance. They can be no more than a sweet interlude, a brief way station along the path paved by Dr. Kevorkian—and by all the kinder and gentler Kevorkians who are waiting a step or two behind. On that path, the signpost, brief and desolating, reads: You are alone."

■ It's a pity to see conservatives joining in the conventional liberal misrepresentation of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. A Lutheran pastor executed on the direct orders of Hitler at the very end of the war, Bonhoeffer is associated by James K. Fitzpatrick, writing in the *Wanderer*, with the "death of God" theologians who urged a "secular Christianity" completely devoid of transcendent reference. That is gravely misleading. In his letters from prison, Bonhoeffer did urge, in a perfectly orthodox way, making the gospel speak more effectively to the world (the secular) for which the gospel is intended. In fact, in his writing, teaching, and work to overthrow the Nazi regime, Bonhoeffer was a vibrant witness to truth and died a martyr to the Christian faith. If Rome ever finds a way to canonize those who were "truly but imperfectly in communion with the Catholic Church" (Vatican Council II), Bonhoeffer should, in my judgment, be high on the list of candidates. His *Ethics* is still read in university and seminary classrooms, and should be in more.

■ Gabriel Austin of New York City is more than assiduous in performing his chosen duty of keeping me honest, or at least accurate, and I suppose I should be grateful. He writes to point out that my assertion (Correspondence, January) that "government employee unions generally have little to do with physical labor" overlooks policemen, firemen, garbagemen, postal workers, bus drivers, nurses, hospital orderlies, and many others. Well, yes, but my reference was to clerks, bureaucrats, and especially teachers who give political and public policy clout to organized labor. Aside from using their union dues for their increasingly leftist political purposes, I doubt that John Sweeney and others count the workers mentioned by Mr. Austin as their ideological allies.

■ It's really true. Some of my best friends, plus one sister, live in Florida. But I confess it's the one state in the Union that I've never been able to warm up to. (All right, so there are two or three I haven't been to.) A while back I spoke at the annual convention of the American College of Surgeons held in Orlando. I stayed in a hotel with a grotesque swan stuck on the top of it. Across the way was a hotel with a grotesque Something Else. There came a moment when I surveyed the entire scene from the hotel window and could not see one thing that was not ugly, as in vulgar. But now *Christianity Today* reports that Orlando is becoming *the* center for evangelical Protestant organizations. Years ago there was Wheaton, Illinois, then Colorado Springs, and now Orlando. What is it with this herd instinct among evangelicals? My friend Bill Bright is building a $42 million headquarters for Campus Crusade near Orlando airport, close to new campuses of Asbury Theological Seminary, Reformed Theological Seminary, Ligonier Ministries, and a host of others. And of course my very dear friend Chuck Colson lives in Florida, when he doesn't have to be in Washington, Buenos Aires, or wherever. I don't get it. But then, I've never understood why so many people, including very intelligent people of my acquaintance, choose not to live in New York City. Be assured, however, that the exit to Florida will not get in the way of projects such as "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." Christian unity is worth an occasional flight to Orlando. Nobody said this would be easy.

■ I get in trouble every time I take a crack at the everything-goes-better-with-Jesus philosophy. "If Jesus is in charge of everything, why shouldn't everything go better with Jesus?" There is a lot that is wrong with that question, but I will let it go for the moment and respond to another question from an irate reader: "Why are you the only one who is critical of the wonderful reports about the medical benefits of religion?" Well, I'm not the only one, and to prove the point I cite the following from a recent *Christian Century* editorial: "Perhaps no one is so simple as to start treating church like a nutritional supplement or a leafy green vegetable—something to add to one's life just to be on the safe side. Nevertheless, with their medically authorized praise of religion, the scientists subtly confirm their own cultural authority. In our society, it's the scientists, not the tellers of sacred stories, that get to define the 'value' of the 'faith factor.' Their reports further inject the dangerous notion that faith is validated by its measurable outcomes. As long as one takes this view of faith, one will never get started on the actual journey of faith. So we can be only halfheartedly enthusiastic about the prospect of scientists conducting tests to demonstrate the power of prayer or the clinical uses of forgiveness. As Kierkegaard once said, when we try to suck worldly wisdom from the movements of faith, we tend to swindle God out of the first movement." That's not the entire answer to the above questions, but it's a big part of it. And this is as good an occasion as any to note the retirement of James M. Wall as editor of the

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Century, a post he has held for twenty-seven years. Over the years, Jim Wall and I have knocked around a bit together and, despite disagreements worthy of the name, I've always found him a congenial fellow. His first love is not editing or the battle of ideas but movies. He once told me that when he comes to New York he sees as many as four a day. That is on the list of things I've never been able to fathom. He is liberal to the bone, which is to be expected in the editor of the flagship publication of Protestant liberalism, but his is not a fierce or nasty liberalism. It is more a taken-for-granted posture of puzzlement toward people who don't agree with what everybody knows. John Buchanan of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago succeeds Wall, and executive editor David Heim will continue to do the hands-on editing. The flagship was launched in 1884 as the *Christian Oracle* and renamed the *Christian Century* in 1900. Despite such massive evidence to the contrary, I am told there are no plans to re-rename the magazine in the year 2000. (The name FIRST THINGS, I am glad to say, is time-proof, except maybe with the definitive arrival of Last Things, at which point, as best I can figure, the future of magazine publishing will be somewhat uncertain.)

■ After vigorous protest the decision was reversed, but Dartmouth College at first forbade Campus Crusade from distributing to students one thousand copies of C. S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*. The Catholic, Episcopal, and Lutheran campus ministries supported the ban because the book might offend non-Christian students. There continue to be a surprising number of occasions for recommending sociologist John Murray Cuddihy's devastatingly insightful 1978 book, *No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste*.

■ Contrary to what I was told a year ago (see "The Cuban Revolutions," May 1998), some Protestants in Cuba are now saying that John Paul II's 1998 visit was a big help for Catholics but not for them. Apostolic Faith pastor Samuel Seymour observes, "I don't know of a single Catholic church that's been closed. They're repairing, rebuilding, and painting Catholic churches, yet my church was closed." Oldline denominations belong to the Council of Churches, which has over the years cooperated with the Castro regime in return for favorable treatment. But they're unhappy as well. "What we need," says one pastor, "is a Presbyterian pope." The bishops of the Church that does have the Pope say they are determined that advances in religious freedom be advances for everyone.

■ Joseph Collison writes in the *New Oxford Review* about what's wrong with sex education that "desensitizes" children with all kinds of salacious detail divorced from affection, love, and the creation of new life. He suggests that the old rhyme chanted by children as they depart for summer vacation might now go like this: "No more pencils, no more looks, no more teacher's dirty books."

■ So why do some people stand by Bill Clinton, no matter what? Walter Shapiro, political columnist for *USA Today*, has one answer: "In early December, New York intellectuals tried to replicate the full-throated glories of the antiwar movement with an anti-impeachment rally at NYU. What lingers in memory is novelist Mary Gordon gushing over Clinton without a tinge of irony: 'Toni Morrison said that he may be our first black president. He may also be our first female president.' That remark and the raucous applause that it inspired speaks volumes about the self-centered values of the American left. As long as Clinton upholds affirmative action and defends abortion rights, then his personal excesses and timid policies are to be defended at all costs. Honesty and integrity are dispensable attributes for a President who cleaves to the correct-thinking positions on gender and race. That is the moral swamp in which liberals have become mired because of their passionate embrace of a political cynic named Bill Clinton."

■ In a column titled "The White Panthers," Frank Rich thinks he is on to something big in his discovery that the politics of radicalism in the 1990s —"our most contentious decade" since the 1960s—is on the right rather than the left. Populist passions, suspicion of government and institutional elites, concerns about the legitimacy of the regime, etc. are all now mainly conservative phenomena. This is no big discovery, nor is it at all surprising. It is the obvious result of the fact that the radical 1960s "long march through the institutions" has succeeded, and today's "establishment," from the White House to the commanding heights of culture, is mainly the left. One notes that Rich himself, who still writes in the strident tones of 1960s leftism, has apparently been demoted at the *Times*. His column will appear only every other week, although he will have 1,400 rather than 700 words, while he works on "longer pieces" for the *Times Magazine*. Perhaps Mr. Rich suspects a conservative conspiracy. Not to worry. With Russell Baker retired and the cantankerously great A. M. Rosenthal cut back to once a week, that leaves as columnists the very liberal Tony Lewis, whose mind is marvelously impervious to the threat of ideas, William Safire, the token conservative, albeit of a libertarian bent, and Maureen Dowd, a lively writer who early on showed high promise but for some reason has decided to follow her predecessor, Anna Quindlen, in reinforcing the prejudice that women pundits are chiefly good at trivializing serious questions by offering cute twists from "the woman's perspective." Apart from Rosenthal on topics such as religious persecution, nobody at the *Times*, certainly not the editorial

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writers, is within hailing distance of civil conversation with the conservatism that is increasingly defined by the cultural conflicts of our public life. It is a partisanship so pervasive and so entrenched that it thinks of itself, probably without guile, as the center. Fortunately, the baneful influence of that delusion is kept in check by the reality of a nation that, with exceptions, lives in a world elsewhere. Most people are not so angry as the angry Mr. Rich would have it, although it is true that activists on the right want to stir them up. In the hope of restoring something like the establishment that the 1960s railed against before its children became the establishment that rails against conservatives who rail against the establishment. The distinguished Italian social theorist Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) elegantly explained this as "the circulation of elites." Which, put somewhat too simply, means: What goes around comes around.

■ On the fiftieth anniversary of its premier, a new and much praised production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* has opened on Broadway. Like, I suppose, millions of others, both the play and the movie had a powerful effect on me when I was a young person just trying out as a thinker of big thoughts. Yet there is a smug and nasty edge to the drama, as with almost all of Miller's writing. As revealed in his memoirs, the model for his pitiful salesman was his uncle, Manny Newman. During the Depression, the well-to-do Miller family went bottom up and had to move from Manhattan to where their relatives, including Uncle Manny, lived in the Midwood section of Brooklyn. Young Arthur hated it, and he despised his boastful uncle as much as his uncle despised his nerdish nephew. *Death of a Salesman* was Arthur's way of getting back. Arthur had class; the Midwood relatives, especially Uncle Manny, did not. One of the mourners at the grave says, "For a salesman, there is no rock bottom to the life. He don't put a bolt to a nut, he don't tell you the law, or give you medicine." To which John Tierney of the *New York Times* responds: "But why is a salesman doing anything less substantial than what a lawyer does—or, for that matter, what a writer does? They're all basically trafficking in information who make a living by influencing people with words. Why pick on salesmen? And why imagine, during the postwar boom in white-collar employment, that Willy would be better off as a blue-collar worker building concrete stoops? Mr. Miller's attitude resembles the old British aristocratic horror at those who work 'in trade.' Social and intellectual elites have traditionally tolerated lawyers and other professionals, and they've looked with kindly condescension on peasant farmers and artisans, but they've disdained money-grubbing merchants. They know how threatening the bourgeoisie's ambitions can be."

■ A pope cannot very well say No when a president of the U.S. wants to welcome him to the country. On the January meeting of John Paul II and President Clinton in St. Louis, a number of newspaper headlines and columns featured the theme of "sinner welcomes saint." *World*, an evangelical magazine, took a different tack with a snippy, not to say sneering, little item about the Pope evoking "weeping, squealing, jumping up and down" young people. *World* notes that the Pope spoke out against the culture of death, and then adds, "Abortionists, however, did business as usual." So he was supposed to shut down the abortion clinics? It is mentioned that in his twenty-minute meeting with Clinton abortion only "came up in passing." The accompanying picture of Pope and President bears the caption "Clasping Hands in St. Louis: JPII with the abortion industry's best friend." More thoughtful evangelicals recognize that John Paul II is without doubt the world's foremost champion of the sanctity of human life, that there would be no pro-life movement in the U.S. or in the world without the Catholic Church, and that most evangelicals were late in joining the pro-life cause, not least because it was viewed as a Catholic issue and they were, not to put too fine a point on it, anti-Catholic. The account in *World* suggests that problem is by no means a thing of the past.

■ In the last several years few words have so suffered from overuse as much as "icon." People who have never contemplated, never mind devoutly schmutzed, a real icon apparently think it means no more than an image of the superlative or essential character of something or the other. The local cigar store advertises a brand that is "the icon of excellence in smoking." But of Elie Wiesel it can rightly be said that he is an icon in our popular culture, a living representation through whom people sense their participation in the reality of the Holocaust. It must be a very difficult life for him, being the celebrity teller of the same story over and over again, year after year, decade after decade. The horror, the horror, the horror, and then pointing out that it could happen again, maybe is happening again, as evidenced by sundry political and social developments disfavored by the quintessentially liberal Mr. Wiesel. I have been on panels with him from time to time, and the adulation is something to behold. At one meeting sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, he was introduced by a prominent politician: "There is no doubt that the Jewish community is the conscience of humanity, and likewise there can be no doubt that our next speaker is the conscience of the Jewish community." I don't say that Mr. Wiesel agreed with that, but neither did he demur. Possibly because he has heard it so often that he despairs of tempering such effusion. Now Notre Dame Press has brought out a

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big book, *Celebrating Elie Wiesel*. The twenty-three essays in this festschrift are not all about Elie Wiesel, but each deals with questions pertinent to his witness. Among the anomalies is the opening item by Alan Dershowitz of Harvard Law School, "Elie Wiesel: A Biblical Life." That's the Mr. Dershowitz of the O. J. Simpson trial who has, among other things, compared the alleged persecution of Bill Clinton to the tactics of the Nazis. A tribute to the icon who is Elie Wiesel deserves better than that.

■ Although it received almost no attention in the general press, it is a remarkable challenge. After the five days of the December bombing of Iraq had ended, Archbishop Edwin O'Brien of the military vicariate wrote all the chaplains under his authority that the bombing was at least morally questionable, and military personnel should be instructed to question their superiors when ordered to take actions that appeared to be "in violation of the moral law." Archbishop O'Brien wrote, "I join the bishops of our country as well as the concerned voices of the Holy See . . . in calling on our President and his advisers to initiate no further military action in the Middle East." Invoking the classic criteria of justified war, he said: "In executing orders that might violate just-war requirements, military personnel face a serious moral challenge. . . . Any individual who judges an action on his or her part to be in violation of the moral law is bound to avoid that action. . . . When clear moral conclusions that a particular act is unjust cannot be reached—because, for example, of lack of sufficient evidence—the individual is justified in following the presumably better informed decision of his or her superiors."

■ In 1996 we discussed the case of Bishop George Lynch and Brother Christopher Moscinski, who violated a court order not to block an abortion clinic in Dobbs Ferry, New York. U.S. District Judge John Sprizzo, in an unusual ruling, acquitted them, saying that their acting in sincere and objectively based religious belief meant that they were not guilty of disrespecting the court order. The prosecutor appealed to the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which refused to hear the case, citing the principle of double jeopardy but indicating that Judge Sprizzo had erred in his interpretation of the law.

■ One wonders if there has ever been a time with so many juveniles in positions of power. No, I don't mean *him*. And I don't mean younger people. I mean people who seem incapable of growing up. Television mogul Ted Turner, for instance. Receiving an award from the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association, Turner, who has five children, said everyone should promise not to have more than two. He said he concluded this years ago after talking with eco-futurist Paul Ehrlich, author of *The Population Bomb*. Turner also opined that the Ten Commandments are "a little out of date." Perhaps with his wife Jane in mind, he said, "If you're only going to have ten rules, I don't know if prohibiting adultery should be one of them." He was also very funny about the Pope. "Ever see a Polish mine detector?" asked Turner, pointing to his leg. He suggested that the Pope should "get with it." To the Pope he said, "Welcome to the twentieth century." Paul Ehrlich, it may be remembered, predicted thirty years ago that pesticide-induced cancers would soon cause life expectancy in the U.S. to plummet to forty-two years. (It is now seventy-six years.) "If I were a gambler," he said then, "I would take even money that England will not exist in the year 2000." There may not always be, but there is now, an England. Recall also that Ehrlich did make a much-publicized thousand-dollar wager with the late economist Julian Simon in 1980 about the world running out of allegedly scarce commodities. Simon collected in 1991. Instead of taking potshots at John Paul II, who has devoted the twenty years of his pontificate to preparing the world for the twenty-first century, indeed the third millennium, Mr. Turner would be well advised to expose his prejudices to the fresh air of fact. I expect he would even find that growing up is more fun. (A day later, the Corporate Affairs Department of the Turner Broadcasting System issued a statement: "Mr. Turner regrets any offense his comments may have caused . . ." etc.)

■ Through reviews, review essays, briefly noteds, and comments here in The Public Square, we pay attention to an awful lot of books in the course of a year. On average, somewhere around three hundred. We know by the response of subscribers that they are voracious readers of books and appreciate the wide coverage. At the same time, three hundred is a very small part of the more than sixty thousand trade books published each year, never mind thousands of scholarly monographs. It is even a small part of the books that fit the category of "religion and public life" (and what that is of real interest doesn't fit that category?). It happens from time to time that an important book that is an obvious candidate for notice in FT goes unmentioned, frequently because a reviewer assigned the book doesn't come through. One such book is George M. Marsden's *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, first published in 1997. Its appearance now in paperback (Oxford University Press, 142 pp., $11.95) is a welcome occasion to bring it to your attention. Marsden's earlier book, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*—also from Oxford, and part of which appeared in these pages—established him as an astute student of today's academic culture. In

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The Outrageous Idea, Marsden expands his former inquiry into basic ideas about scholarship that create a climate that is pervasively hostile to religion. Young academics quickly pick up on the cue that explicit reference to religion is not welcome and they become adept at self-censorship. Marsden writes: "Younger scholars who are Christian quickly learn that influential professors hold negative attitudes toward open religious expression and that to be accepted they should keep quiet about their faith. So rather than attempting to reflect on the relationship between religious faith and their other beliefs, they learn to hide their religious beliefs in professional settings. Such self-censorship by its very nature proceeds quietly, but the attitudes it fosters are pervasive." The book is not an instance of special pleading for Christians. The gravamen of Marsden's case is that the academy's hostility to religion undermines the very idea of the university as an institution dedicated to honest intellectual engagement. Academics both junior and senior should want to check out Marsden's diagnosis and explore what they together might do about it, even at the risk of appearing outrageous.

■ Unto the third and fourth generation journalist Gary MacEoin has favored readers with his dogged hewing of a relentless progressive line on all things Catholic. He covered the Synod for America for *National Catholic Reporter* and he does not like at all my book occasioned by that event, *Appointment in Rome: The Church in America Awakening*. The beginning of the first line of his review—"Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, a former Episcopal minister who is now a Catholic priest"—does not instill confidence. He is unhappy that I say that liberation theology had an "ideological attachment to Marxist class struggle," although he and most liberation theologians said precisely that over the years. They usually did not, of course, call it an ideological attachment. He is especially upset that I say liberation theology is largely a thing of the past. As counterevidence, he notes that a book called *The Future of Liberation Theology* has just been published by Orbis Books. QED. (So often has Orbis Books put out almost identical books pushing the liberationist line that one wag in the publishing business calls it Orbis Book.) MacEoin notes that I am critical of some Latin American and Canadian bishops, and then adds, "Even the U.S. bishops, although generally treated more positively, are less than perfect." I know the suggestion that the U.S. bishops are less than perfect must shock him and the readers of *NCR*. He is all for the developed nations forgiving international debts—a subject much discussed at the Synod and about which I am somewhat skeptical—and notes that, compared with the selfish U.S., Russia forgave $3.14 billion and Mexico over $1 billion. He does not mention that, with economies like that of Russia or Mexico, you could forgive trillions without donor or debtor noticing the difference. I don't understand these authors who say they don't read their reviews. They don't know what they're missing.

■ According to the editors of *National Review*, "The Pope has been inveighing against the death penalty in developed nations, and his strongest argument has been that it precludes repentance (and salvation)." They go on to disagree, citing Dr. Johnson on the concentrating of the mind occasioned by the prospect of execution. There are a number of things wrong here. The development of Catholic doctrine in opposition to capital punishment applies everywhere, although in some countries the prison system is so undeveloped that there is no alternative punishment. The "strongest argument" against capital punishment is the taking of human life when it is not justified by absolute necessity. Moreover, the Johnson formula does not allow for extension in the event of non-repentance. The editors go on to criticize Governor Mel Carnahan of Missouri for commuting, at the Pope's request, the death sentence of Darrell Mease, who killed three people. "Governor Carnahan," the editors complain, "who says he still supports capital punishment, violated a fundamental postulate of republican government: that it is a rule of laws and not men." Nonsense. This republican government provides for commutation, pardon, and other instruments of discretion in order that men might temper their administration of law with prudence and mercy. Finally, I note that it is my friend Bill Buckley who describes himself as "inveighing," and he does it marvelously well. It doesn't seem quite the word for the Pope's exercise of his teaching office.

■ A few years back, just before the Summit of the Americas, the novelist William Styron invited President Clinton to a soirée at his summer house on Martha's Vineyard. Carlos Fuentes was there, and so was Gabriel Garcia Marquez, who recently recounted their dinner conversation in a predictably fawning article entitled "The Mysteries of Bill Clinton." After almost four hours talking with his "literary round table" about such topics as their favorite movies (Clinton: *High Noon*) and their favorite books (Clinton: Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*), Fuentes, suddenly inspired, asked the question, Who did the President think of as his enemies? The President's reply was, it is reported, "immediate and abrupt": "My only enemy is right-wing religious fundamentalism." Surely he is too modest.

■ The pain of being snubbed. An organization called "ExCatholics for Christ" has been rallying people against the project known as Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT), and they have

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written the Protestant participants in ECT, calling upon them to repent and announce their repentance at a forthcoming conference in Dallas that will, they say, be "highly critical" of ECT. No such letters were sent to Catholic participants. I suppose that, ex-Catholics though they say they are, they still subscribe to the notion of invincible ignorance.

■ Scientists have discovered the most elderly exploding star so far—a supernova said to be ten billion years old and eighteen billion light years away. The American Science Academy calls it the biggest discovery of the year that some strange force appears to be pushing the universe ever farther apart. "It's likely never to stop, never to collapse, never to come to an end," says astronomer Saul Perlmutter. "That was a real surprise. That was a real shock." He does not say whether it is a pleasant surprise and, truth to tell, I'm not sure either.

■ Bats in the belfrey are a venerable phenomenon, but in the thirteenth-century All Saints Church in the village of Mattersey, England, 150 miles north of London, bats are pretty much wherever they want to be. The same is true all over the country. Britain has sixteen species of bats and seven prefer to reside in churches. Bat-protection laws prevent their being removed, or even disturbed. Bats are terribly messy creatures, but the conservation group English Nature reminds worshipers of the "significance of the church for bats," and suggests that works of art and other valued objects be moved to areas that receive what it terms "a low rate of deposition." Parishioners are cautioned not to remove bat droppings just because they want to sit there. Rather, they should "count the number of spots of urine or droppings" in order to provide better "baseline data on the disposition of bat excreta." Politics frequently requires hard choices, and at some point Parliament may have to consider which is the more endangered species, bats or people who go to church. If forced to choose between the two species of churchgoers, observers are not sure that people would win. With old barns and other farm buildings dwindling in the English countryside, bats need new roosts, and cold, drafty churches suit them best. They need the churches. For people, church is optional. It makes sense, in an eccentrically English way.

■ The Pope doesn't take time to watch many films, so when he does and then offers words of high praise, it is worth noting. If you have the chance, go see Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful*, an Italian film with English subtitles, which dares a comedy (in the classic sense of the term) situated in the improbable circumstance of a Nazi concentration camp. The film keeps coming back to mind, generating thoughts about how narrative (in this case a narrative that turns suffering into a "game") sustains the human in the face of unspeakable adversity. It is profound and also very funny. I could go on, but enough. Go see it. (I am pleased to note that after this was written, and just before our deadline, the film won three Oscars.)

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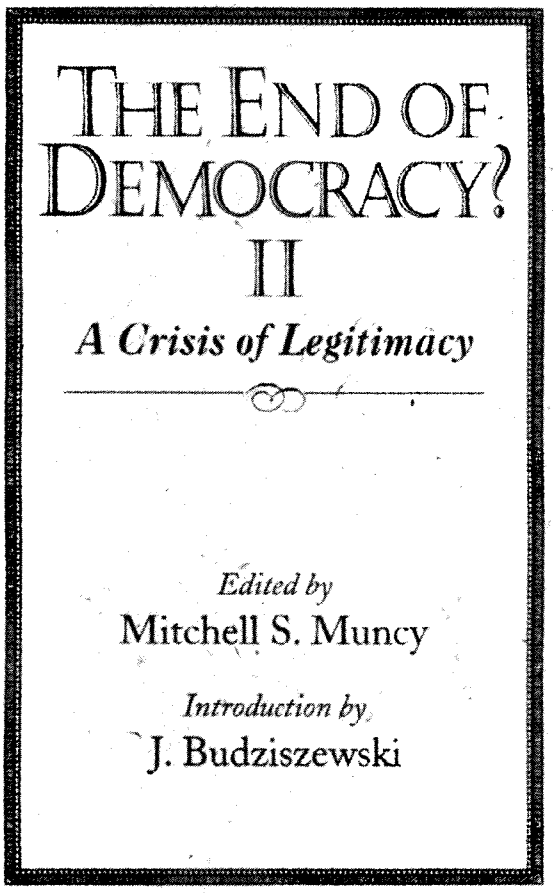

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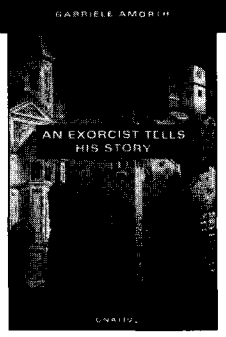

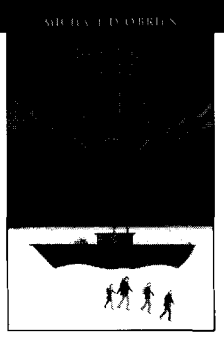

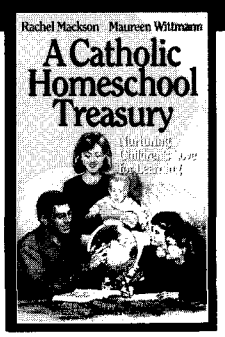

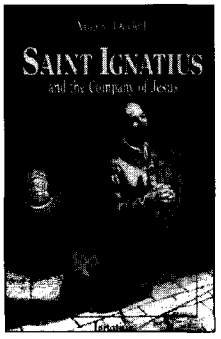

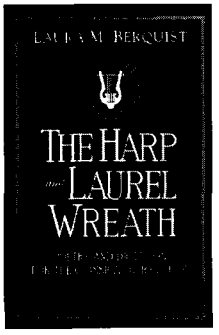

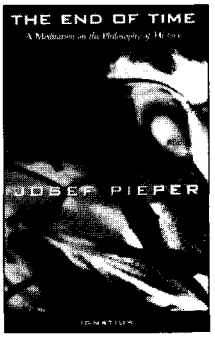

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